

“Vulnerable Victims or Agents of Change?”

A qualitative content analysis on the representation of women in
Nepal's National Adaptation Plan



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Abstract

Climate adaptation policies in Nepal have previously depicted women as vulnerable victims. Policy-makers have described women as a weak and voiceless group that needs “saving” in environmental politics. Several studies have emphasized that these simplistic representations perpetuate gender stereotypes and omit proactive roles in climate action. Recent developments in feminist academia recognize the increasing need of conceptualizing women as positive agents of change. This has led to renewed interest in how women are represented in contemporary adaptation policy. This thesis applies a feminist constructivist lens to explore the dominant frames of women in climate change represented in Nepal's updated National Adaptation Plan. Through qualitative content analysis, the study analyzes the National Adaptation Plan and its accompanying documents and uncovers five dominant frames. Findings reveal that women have separately been described as agents, vulnerable, caregivers, knowledgeable, and left behind. The results indicate that women's representation in Nepal's adaptation policy is more multifaceted than previously assumed by scholars. The study advances our understanding of how the dominant frames increase individual agency and simultaneously amplify gender-based expectations regarding passivity, victimhood, and nurture.

Keywords: women, representation, climate adaptation policy, Nepal, feminist constructivism

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1. Introduction

Countries have started to develop National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) to make communities resilient to climate-induced changes (UNFCCC, n.d). The ways countries choose to adapt is a topic that continues to dominate climate debates, but a less discussed question is “adaptation for whom?” (Nightingale, 2014: 219). When people are asked to explain what comes to mind when envisioning women in climate change, there is rarely a singular answer. Some think of a woman at the forefront of environmental action, performing innovative techniques in resource management. Others picture the physical consequences of climate hazards where women are left most vulnerable, finding it difficult to cope with the impacts (Detraz, 2023: 141, 29). Researchers acknowledge that the latter conceptualization has been the dominant frame in NAPs in South Asia (Arora-Jonsson, 2011). There has been a tendency to portray women as weak and helpless, assigning them identities that need “saving” in environmental politics (Singh et al., 2021; Shehwar, 2021; Gurung and Bisht, 2014: 42).

Women's proactive experiences have remained in the shadow of climate policy which underlines the political nature of adaptation (Vij et al., 2021). Adaptation is the process where societies alter environmental and socio-economic arrangements to counter climate change (UNFCCC, n.d). It does also refer to strategies people use to bring about new opportunities from the environmental crisis. However, the preference and experiences of some actors have been valued, whilst others remain neglected (Eriksen et al., 2014: 13). Previous scholars have emphasized that this creates a static understanding of women, limiting their agency and further perpetuating gender-based expectations of vulnerability (Nightingale, 2014: 230; Khadka et al., 2015). Several countries in South Asia, such as Nepal, have responded to the proclaimed lack of gender awareness and submitted updated versions of their NAPs (Rai et al., 2021). Since 2010 when the initial NAPs were created, a conceptual shift has occurred in feminist academia where women are framed as positive agents of change in adaptation projects (Arora-Jonsson, 2011: 750). This leads to renewed interest in how women are represented in contemporary adaptation policy.

The simplistic portrayal of women becomes consequential in countries where the gender equality index remains low and climate hazards are expected to increase (LEG, 2015: 13). For these reasons, this thesis investigates the representation of women in Nepal's recently updated NAP policy and its accompanying documents. Nepal is one of the most climate-sensitive countries in the world, making the development of an inclusive adaptation framework particularly urgent (Shrestha and Gurung, 2020). Nepal forms an interesting case as its newly submitted NAP has been praised for focusing on the concept of “leave no one behind” (GoN, 2020: 3), and is one of only three countries in South Asia that has developed a NAP. Its alignment with development objectives has been described as successful, inspiring other countries in the region to create adaptation frameworks on a similar basis (Khandekar and Michael, 2019; NAP Central, n.d).

By using qualitative content analysis, the study explores the dominant frames of women in climate change represented in Nepal's updated NAP 2021. Frames refer to particular ways of conceptualizing something into understandable packages (Ferree and Merrill, 2000: 456). From a feminist constructivist lens, the thesis gains insights into the social construction of women, revealing how representations in environmental politics dictate our perception of women's effective role in climate action.

1.1 Aim and Research Question

The study aims to explore how the government of Nepal and related government ministries have framed women's position in climate change throughout the formulation of the National Adaptation Plan. Representation in climate policy is a highly politicized debate because policymakers produce “truths” that form our understanding of how the environmental crisis should be addressed (Ojha et al., 2016). By utilizing a feminist constructivist perspective, the paper seeks to provide insights into how frames are socially constructed. This implies that representations can reinforce as well as challenge understandings that limit agency, and perpetuate gender-based expectations. Recalling that the NAP is a recently produced strategy, the results can be used to evaluate the contemporary mainstreaming of women's experiences in the country's adaptation policy. The research question of this study goes as follows:

What dominant frames of women in climate change are represented in Nepal's National Adaptation Plan?

1.2 Delimitations

This thesis focuses on the representation of women and there are three main reasons for this delimitation. Firstly, as illustrated in the introduction, further insights are needed into how their multifaceted relationship with climate adaptation has become transmitted into contemporary policy in Nepal (Nightingale, 2014: 231). Secondly, most policy-makers who draft adaptation documents in the country are men and scholars argue that their perceptions have been replicated in current policies whilst others' voices have become omitted (Nagoda and Nightingale, 2014; Nightingale, 2014). Lastly, both researchers and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Nepal have called for additional studies on how current adaptation policies can be re-defined inclusively for women (Lamsal and Rai, 2014; Ojha et al., 2016: 4). Based on these three reasons, this study is concentrated on how the government of Nepal and related ministries frame women's position in climate change.

1.3 Outline

This thesis begins by providing a background of existing research on women in climate adaptation in Nepal and the second part presents the development of NAPs. The third chapter describes how feminist constructivism will be used as the paper's theoretical lens, complemented by Detraz's (2023) four common frames of women in climate change that serves as an analytical framework. The fourth chapter outlines the methodology of the thesis, explaining the use of qualitative content analysis. The empirical material will be presented followed by a section that describes how the data is analyzed. Further attention is also given to the ethical considerations as well as the limitations of the study. The fifth chapter introduces the analysis, describing the dominant frames of women, presented in the order based on their recurrence in the data. This is followed by a discussion that broadens the scope of the findings. The final section presents the conclusion and points to avenues for future research.

2. Background

This chapter begins by presenting previous research on how women are coping with climate-induced changes in Nepal and brings further insights into how their active role has been considered in CCA policy. The following part illustrates how representations become internalized into people's perceptions of their own identities. The second section provides a background on the overall objective of NAPs, followed by an explanation of the development of Nepal's NAP.

2.1 Literature on women and climate adaptation in Nepal

The Nepalese civil war ended in 2006 and since then, there has been an increasing demand to acknowledge how fair access to adaptation strategies can reduce climate risks for marginalized groups, including women (Ojha et al., 2016). Simultaneously, there is an extensive body of literature that has investigated how women are currently adapting to climate-induced changes.

The landlocked country has been exposed to floods, droughts, and heavy rainfall and it has severe effects on three sectors where women play key roles (Pandey, 2020: 2; Gurung and Bisht, 2014). Studies emphasize how environmental hazards cause disruptions in the agricultural-based economy and women are particularly affected considering that approximately 75% of them work in the sector (Joshi et al., 2022: 214; Goodrich et al., 2017: 12). It is also acknowledged that they play a prominent role in mitigating these impacts through climate-smart agricultural practices (Paudyal, 2019: 4; Heyojoo et al., 2017; Khadka et al., 2015). Moreover, extensive fires have led to the degradation of forest's ecosystems, a sector in which many women are engaged in unpaid labor. Prior research has shed light on how women have participated in forestry programs and developed more sustainable strategies for resource extraction (Leone, 2019; Mahat, 2015; Satyal et al., 2018). Lastly, the water sector has been threatened by climate change, causing increasing demand for water supply and women play a proactive role in water management (Rajouria et al., 2022: 319; Pandey, 2020: 2; Ray, 2022; Ranjitkar and Haukanes, 2022). Taken together, studies argue that women are actively coping with climate impacts in Nepal. However, as will be discussed in the following section, these views have been scarcely replicated in CCA policy.

2.1.1 Women's representation in Nepalese climate adaptation policy

Previous literature on CCA policies emphasizes that the topic has been depoliticized in Nepal. Although there are many studies on how women adapt to climate-induced changes, research on how it is integrated into CCA policy remains limited compared to other countries (Vij et al., 2017). Adaptation has been understood mainly in a scientific manner (Meher and Prasad, 2022: 49; Pandey, 2020). Ojha et al., (2016) argue that this is partly explained by Nepal's political instability where policymakers have sought to reduce political contestation by focusing on the physical aspects of the environmental crisis and its impact on women.

Authors have recognized how this leads to a homogenized representation of women where they are framed as weak and voiceless (Rai et al., 2021: 212; Gurung and Bisht, 2014: 42). Documents have frequently included a table with sex-disaggregated data illustrating the number of women that die in natural disasters (Lau et al., 2021). These ideas are rooted in essentialist arguments from the 1970s when women were presumed to have an inherent link to the environment (Meher and Prasad, 2022: 12). Research provides evidence for these arguments in Nepal's adaptation policy established in 2010. Nightingale (2014) conducted a policy review revealing that women's experiences were raised two times in the policy apart from supplementing parts of the paper, and ideas from the 1970s were still detectable. The study also used an intersectional lens to demonstrate how descriptions of vulnerability omit aspects of class, caste, power relations, and other factors of inequity that dictate vulnerabilities in Nepal.

Authors have contextualized these findings and brought insights into how it takes time for gender norms to change. During the 1990s, researchers started to question the gender-based norms that have amplified women's exposure to environmental hazards. New conceptualization in academia emerged which situated the topic in the socio-political environment and drew extensively on women's proactive role (Arora-Jonsson, 2011: 745; Khadka et al., 2015). Although studies have been conducted on Nepal's NAP 2010 to investigate how ideas have been transmitted in the document, it was more than a decade ago since they launched the adaptation policy. Since then, the government has formulated a new NAP, and further insights into how the policy integrates women's interest and experience remains to be addressed.

2.1.2 Internalized understanding of women's position in climate adaptation

Another recurring theme in the field of CCA emphasizes how people come to accept frames of women that are represented in policy through the vicious circle of internalization. This implies that representations are not simply labels, they are instrumental in the sense that they bring about certain attitudes which become integrated into people's perception of their own identities (Eriksen et al., 2015; Nightingale, 2014). When women are framed as fragile victims, they subsequently believe that they lack adequate abilities to cope with climate change due to their biological sex (Eriksen et al., 2015: 529). CCA policy can therefore reinforce dominant frames to support the status quo or oppose simplistic understandings of women by challenging taken-for-granted assumptions of victimhood. Instead of solely describing women as a particularly weak group more likely to die from natural disasters, policymakers might describe them as knowledge providers who withhold valuable expertise (Eriksen et al., 2015).

2.2 National Adaptation Plans

This section presents the broad objectives of NAPs and explains how they integrate gender aspects. The development of NAPs was formally confirmed during the Cancun Adaptation Framework (CAF) in 2010 and they constitute a part of a country's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC). NDCs are climate action plans created upon request of the Paris Agreement to present countries' self-defined adaptive strategies. The difference is that NAPs are responsible for domestic adaptation groundwork whilst NDCs apply to a country's international climate dialogue (UNEP, n,d; Daze et al., 2018).

It is important to acknowledge that a NAP does not solely refer to a single document because it is a composite product of an extensive formulation process. The main point is that information presented in the preparatory documents provides a more detailed background on adaptation assessments (Hammill et al., 2019: 6). Countries have the autonomy to independently decide what specific documents they use to support the final policy, but the commonality is that the findings from the assessments become translated adaptation strategies. For these reasons, the final policy is not the sole important outcome of the NAP process (Hammill et al., 2019: 2, 6).

All NAPs set out short, medium, and long-term actions which rely on two goals. First, they aim to decrease the burden of climate change by making people more resilient to the crisis. Secondly, they seek to incorporate adaptation strategies into development planning (UNEP, n,d). The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) has prompted countries to integrate women's experiences and interests in both of these goals to ensure inclusivity in future development pathways (LEG, 2015: 9). Scholars have detected that countries have started to make more extensive references to gender aspects in their NAPs since 2018 (Daze and Hunter, 2022: 8). However, there is no standard framework of how the policy should be drafted as they are outcomes of country-driven processes. It requires countries to make explicit clarifications on how the interests of various actors are integrated into adaptive strategies which is why individual NAPs differ in their representation of women (Eriksen et al., 2014: 13; GoN, 2020).

2.2.1 Nepal's National Adaptation Plan 2021

Nepal submitted the National Adaptation Plan in 2021 after a six-year-long formulation process. The document is constituted of 64 programs aimed at strengthening climate resilience in eight different sectors (MoFE, 2017: 1, 7). The policy is accompanied by a synthesis stocktaking report, a vulnerability/risk assessment report, and a document that reflects on gaps in the previous adaptation policy (Khandekar and Michael, 2019: 5; Hammill et al., 2019: 5). For that reason, the units of analysis in this thesis are the final NAP as well as the additional documents created by the government and related ministries during the formulation process.

The government of Nepal claims that they have integrated a gender-responsive approach as a crosscutting area throughout the NAP and adjusted it to the needs of the Nepalese population (GoN, 2020). Singh et al., (2021) argue the way women are represented in policy indicates whether a country utilizes a gender-neutral or gender-responsive policy approach. The policy needs to challenge existing gender divides, present propositions of how to reconfigure them, and emphasize women's active and participatory role in adaptation in order to be defined as responsive (Singh et al., 2021: 962, 969). This thesis will contribute insights regarding how women are represented in the NAP policy by looking specifically at the dominant frames throughout the documents.

3. Theoretical and Analytical Framework

The following chapter presents the theoretical and analytical framework of this study. The first part outlines how feminism and constructivism have been merged into a broader theoretical framework. The second part of the chapter presents the analytical framework constituted by Detraz's (2023) four common frames of women in climate change.

3.1 Feminist Constructivism

Locher and Prügl (2001) argue that it is useful to combine international relation (IR) feminism and constructivism to create a middle ground. Constructivism contributes with insights about agents and structures, explaining how policy-makers reinforce and/or potentially challenge norms around identities through communicative events. However, the theory does not acknowledge the construction of gender and power because it perceives power as an external quantity (Locher and Prügl, 2001: 111). IR feminism fills the gap and sees power as an essential part of knowledge construction (Locher and Prügl, 2001: 113). The following part outlines the underpinnings of IR feminism and constructivism and explains how they will be merged into a theoretical framework.

Firstly, constructivism builds on the idea that knowledge is socially constructed and thus studies how we perceive the world around us, rather than treating it as naturally given (Burr, 2015: 9). A central part of the theory is the mutually constituted interaction between agents and structure. This implies that common ideas, values, and norms around identities, influence agents that work in a particular context. Simultaneously, the ideas become reinforced when agents use them. Communicative events are the mediating channel where agents and structures interact (Locher and Prügl, 2001: 113-114). Secondly, the theory adopts an anti-essentialist stance to our understanding of individuals by opposing the view that people withhold underlying natural “traits” as a part of their identities (Burr, 2015: 4-6). Accordingly, constructivist researchers draw on a critical standpoint of how society organizes assumptions around a specific social phenomenon (Burr, 2015: 2-3).

IR feminists argue that women are social constructs, and such construction gives rise to gender-based expectations that generate ideas about femininity (Locher and Prügl, 2001: 113, 115). A central argument among IR feminists is that power is an integral part of how women view themselves and their identities. Any communication about the constructions of gender becomes a tool for societal domination as well as subordination (Locher and Prügl, 2001: 116). The theory aims to emphasize the experience of women to understand how ideas about gender are created, rather than inherently given (Locher and Prügl, 2001: 115). It criticizes traditional theories for being androcentric where the voices of those living on the margin are left unexplored (Harding, 1987: 3-4).

From the constructivist lens, this thesis takes an anti-essentialist stance on conceptualizations of identities. In addition, it utilizes the theory's view on the interaction between agents and structures. From IR feminism the study involves the outlook on power by exploring how power and gender are integrated components in the construction of knowledge (Locher and Prügl, 2001: 115-118). Therefore it becomes possible to explore how policymakers' representation of women resonates with specific assumptions and views on femininity. This aligns with the aim of the study, revealing dominant frames that reinforce or challenge gender-based expectations.

3.2. Analytical Framework: Frames of women in climate change

Detraz (2023) uses the feminist constructivist theory to investigate how agents are affected by certain gendered assumptions during knowledge construction processes. The author presents four frames of women, each featuring a specific role linked to the environmental crisis. The author argues that the way policy-makers portray women will, in turn, lead to different understandings of climate change. The book provides deeper insights into what roles women are assumed to play in CCA strategies, and what specific duties policymakers expect them to perform (Detraz, 2023: 1,4). The frames presented are based on insights from climate scholars that work predominantly in the United States, Germany, and other countries in Europe. The author justifies the geographical focus by arguing that norms around women in climate change are dominantly created during international negotiations. Thereafter, they spread across the globe through the process of norm diffusion (Detraz, 2023: 26-27).

The four categorizations cannot fully reflect how all people perceive women-climate relations but it sheds light on four manifestations evident in environmental debates (Detraz, 2023: 10). They are outcomes from certain discourses and narratives that policymakers engage with in climate politics (Detraz, 2023: 20). For this reason, the author's four frames will serve as the paper's analytical framework. The following section begins by presenting two frames that reproduce ideas of passivity and nurture, followed by a description of two frames that strengthens agency.

3.2.1 Women as vulnerable

There are multiple ways to operationalize women's vulnerability to climate change. This paper utilizes Detraz's (2023) description of the simplistic and homogenized women as vulnerable frame. This frame presents women's position in adaptation through their disproportionate exposure to environmental risks such as floods, drought, or heavy rainfall (Detraz, 2023: 34, 56). A common description states that they are intrinsically more likely to die from natural disasters and when this portrayal is dominant in climate policy it leads to a “victimization” of women in adaptation (Detraz, 2023: 58). The frame does not recognize the existing distribution of resources or responsibilities but instead expresses how poor health, low literacy rates, and poverty are the contributing factors to vulnerability (Detraz, 2023: 48-49). It states that these development deficits limit people's ability to cope with climate-induced changes. This social construction of women inhibits equitable gender relations by reproducing assumptions of women as a weak, sensitive group that needs “saving” (Detraz, 2023: 33).

3.2.2 Women as caregivers

The representation of women as caregivers operationalizes women's experience in climate change as nurturing caretakers for their families and communities. They are expected to look after relatives, collect wood, and provide food for their households (Detraz, 2023: 66-67). It states that women have an inherent concern about nature and as mothers, they are more likely than men to handle the aftermath of environmental hazards to protect relatives (Detraz, 2023: 74). As an example, after an environmental hazard has occurred, women are prone to travel long distances to collect water for their family members. The frame does often put women and their kids into a unified group, emphasizing how women perform house chores and duties (Detraz, 2023: 69). It takes away their role as active change agents or informed individuals. This simplistic

portrayal reinforces dichotomous view of public/private spheres and situates women's position in adaptation in relation to safe-keeping (Detraz, 2023: 65-96).

3.2.3 Women as knowledgeable

The frame of women as knowledgeable underlines how women withhold valuable information about climate change. It highlights that women are not only well-informed about climate coping strategies because of their involvement in “traditional” female-led sectors such as agriculture and forestry. Being restricted to that level would only reproduce gender-based expectations (Detraz, 2023: 105-106). Rather, it describes women as equally competent in creating and sharing expertise about the climate crisis, which is why the author argues that they should be integrated into decision-making spheres (Detraz, 2023: 99). The frame highlights women in leadership positions and titles connected to climate-related work. It draws particular attention to including women's unique competence in political roles to educate others (Detraz, 2023: 98, 107). This frame contributes to a transformative understanding of women's role in climate adaptation. The author states that this frame has the ability to oppose the women as vulnerable representation (Detraz, 2023: 25).

3.2.4 Women as agents

The frame of women as agents conceptualize women's position in climate change by describing them as active individuals. This can be exemplified by women as laborers contributing to effective environmental resource management (Detraz, 2023: 141). Contrary to the vulnerable description, it does not portray them as a passive group of individuals, but rather how they are agents of participation. From this perspective, women are proactive (Detraz, 2023: 159). This frame does also draw attention to areas where women's ability to engage in climate strategies is blocked. This refers to exclusion from climate debates, as well as economic and political patterns of marginalization (Detraz, 2023: 150). As the author argues, when policy-makers represent women within the agent frame, it becomes possible to realize the societal transformation needed for gender-just climate action. The interplay between agents and structures in this view creates openings by developing new norms around women's role in climate change (Detraz, 2023: 135, 168).

4. Methodology

This chapter introduces the research design and use of qualitative content analysis as a research method. The following section defines the sampling strategy, presents the chosen material, and acknowledges potential biases due to diverging number of pages of the studied documents. The fourth part outlines how the analysis will be conducted followed by the two final sections describing the ethical aspects that need to be taken into consideration when utilizing the document, as well as the limitations of the study.

4.1 Research design

This thesis is a qualitative single case study that provides detailed knowledge of how the government of Nepal and the related ministries has represented women in the NAP formulation between 2017 and 2021. The fundamental element of a qualitative design is to obtain in-depth knowledge about a research topic through non-numerical material (Robson and McCartan, 2016: 76). The data collection uses the final policy and related policy-formulation documents to the NAP 2021. To clarify, the study does not compare the different documents or investigate the evolution of women's representation between 2017-2021. This thesis treats the formulation process as a unified entity considering that the final NAP policy builds on the supportive documents. The data has been analyzed through qualitative content analysis, mainly performing deductive coding based on Detraz's (2023) four frames of women. In addition, the paper includes the emergence of a new frame evident in the documents through inductive coding.

4.2 Research method

Qualitative content analysis is built on constructivist epistemology, seeking to reveal how meanings and understandings of social phenomena are expressed in communications (Drisko and Maschi, 2015: 88, 92). The method aims to examine and interpret data to find dominant themes and specific understandings in the content (Drisko and Maschi, 2015: 82). This implies that it has a descriptive nature by uncovering how ideas are manifested in words. It does also involve the study of latent content in which qualitative content analysis broadens the original size of the data, revealing underlying meanings (Drisko and Maschi, 2015: 93). Hence, by using qualitative content analysis, it becomes possible to show how “texts can be an integral

part in creating and maintaining status quo, so too can they help challenge long-held beliefs and practices” (Leavy, 2007: 7).

The research process initiated with the selection of documents. The second step was to choose the unit of analysis and this paper aims to reveal themes in the data rather than solely investigating the frequency of words (Robson and McCartan, 2016: 353). In this case, “themes” refers to dominant frames of women in climate change. However, as words are often used to produce a theme in latent content the researcher designed codes for words and phrases. These frames are simplified categorizations of a complex phenomenon. This implies that it cannot fully capture all aspects of the multi-faceted relationship between women and climate change. However, it provides the relevant tools to detect common characteristics that policy-makers associate with women's position in adaptation, thus making it possible to merge specific ideas into dominant frames. Lastly, in order to reduce the amount of data overload, the following keywords were applied when searching for data in each text: women, woman, and girls.

4.3 Sampling and material

The selection of Nepal's updated NAP emerged from a literature review revealing how researchers criticized the former version for a simplistic representation of women. The sampling began by identifying the updated NAP policy submitted to the UNFCCC in 2021. Considering that the definition of a NAP refers to an extensive formulation process, this study followed a purposeful sampling strategy by utilizing the snowballing method, picking out additional documents published by the government and the related ministries. The paper excludes publications that are not produced with the explicit purpose to support the final NAP. The reason for this is to ensure internal generalizability which refers to “the generalizability of conclusions within the setting studied” (Robson and McCartan, 2016: 173). I accessed the documents through Nepal's Climate Change & Development Portal which uploads official texts and reports from each government institution (NCCDP, n.d). The texts were published in English and the selected data fulfilled the following criteria:

- Published as a supporting document to the National Adaptation Plan 2021
- Cited in the final National Adaptation Plan 2021 document
- Created by the government of Nepal or a government ministry

The thesis analyzes four documents in total, the final NAP policy 2021 and three supportive documents. The first text is the synthesis stocktaking report which is a summary of the sectoral stocktaking documents. It provides information on the vulnerability of climate-sensitive sectors, including the identification of existing risks, and outlines people's ability to respond to projected climate changes (Khandekar and Michael, 2019: 5). The second document contains reflections on the previous NAP 2010. It identifies the key issues and existing gaps in the NAP process to present concrete ways forward for the preparatory stage (GoN, 2020). The last supportive document is the vulnerability risk assessment paper which presents actions that need to be taken into consideration in regard to disadvantaged groups. The objective of the document is to detect climate vulnerabilities, present potential coping strategies, and shed light on new opportunities connected to adaptation (MoFE, 2021: 10). A list of the four texts is presented below.

- MoPE. (2017) Synthesis of Stocktaking Report for National Adaptation Plan (NAP) Formulation Process in Nepal. Kathmandu: Ministry of Population and Environment.
- MoFE. (2018) Nepal's National Adaptation Plan (NAP) Process: Reflections on lessons learned and the way forward. Kathmandu: Ministry of Forest and Environment, Government of Nepal, NAP Global Network, Action on Climate Today (ACT), and Practical Action Nepal.
- GoN. (2021) National Adaptation Plan (NAP) 2021-2050: Summary For Policymakers. Kathmandu: Ministry of Forest and Environment.
- MoFE. (2021) Vulnerability and Risk Assessment and Identifying Adaptation Options: Summary for Policy Makers. Ministry of Forests and Environment, Government of Nepal. Kathmandu, Nepal.

4.3.1 Potential biases of chosen data

The researcher acknowledges that there is a potential bias due to the diverging number of pages of the studied material. For instance, the document “Nepal's National Adaptation Plan (NAP) Process: Reflections on lessons learned and the way forward” (MoFE, 2018) is 45 pages long compared to the “Vulnerability and Risk Assessment and Identifying Adaptation Options: Summary for Policy Makers” (MoFE, 2021) which is 113 pages long, excluding references. This implies that there is a difference in the

extent they make references to women's concerns or interests and there is hence an “unbalanced” amount of data in each text. As a consequence, citations from some of the documents might be used more frequently in the analysis section. This does not impact the representability of the findings, considering that this study does not investigate the evolution of women's representation between the documents.

4.4 Data analysis

The study uses both the deductive and inductive approaches to qualitative content analysis. The first step was operationalization, clarifying how the frames will be detected (Robson and McCartan, 2016: 353-355). While reading Detraz's (2023) book describing women in climate change the researcher started to separately assign codes in the form of words or phrases under each frame. Additionally, categories were added to the codes in order to clarify what characteristics the words and phrases had in common (Robson and McCartan, 2016: 354). This process was carried out for each frame i.e. women as vulnerable, caregivers, knowledgeable, and women as agents. A simplified version of the coding matrix can be found on the next page, the more extensive matrix that was used during the data collection and analysis stage can be accessed in Appendix II.

As Detraz (2023) argues, frames can in fact overlap which implies that descriptions can point to multiple ways of constructing knowledge around women's roles in climate adaptation. I therefore acknowledge that the frames are not always mutually exclusive. In addition, solely relying on a deductive approach implies that the study might miss out on alternative themes evident in the data (Drisko and Maschi, 2015: 101). As this paper seeks to explore Nepal's representation of women from a nuanced perspective, the study does also read, interprets, and produces codes from the data through inductive coding which resulted in an additional frame.

Operationalization

Codes	Category/Traits	Frames/Themes
Exposed to environmental hazards, women in natural disasters, high-risk group, mortality, morbidity, poverty,	Victims, helpless, passive, in need of saving	Women as vulnerable
Mothers, wife, parenting, worrying about family, travel to secure resources, fetching water, collect natural resources, provide food	Care responsibilities, motherhood, reproductive role	Women as caregivers
Withholding climate change knowledge, well-informed actors, need for female leadership, more female politicians, want increased voice in decision-making	Climate change leaders, knowledge creators, knowledge providers	Women as knowledgeable
Involved in environmental management, participants in programmes/projects, key players, practical skill-set, laborers, Face challenges, economic constraints, political constraints, exclusion, marginalization	Proactive, influential, individual agency Sidelined in climate action, blocked, hindered	Women as agents

4.5 Ethical considerations

There are two aspects that the researcher acknowledges when utilizing Nepal's NAP documents. Firstly, it is essential to recognize that the policy was produced by the Nepalese government and related ministries. The representations can be driven by political objectives implying that the results are not generalizable to NAPs developed by other countries (Scheyvens, 2014: 82). This thesis does not aspire to apply the results in the broader context of women's representation in CCA, instead, it focuses on the specific case of Nepal. The second aspect relates to the permission to retrieve and study the documents (Scheyvens, 2014: 84). The material collected has been accessed from

Nepal's Climate Change & Development Portal established by the Ministry of Environment. The source explicitly recognizes that the selected texts can be used by students for research purposes (NCCDP, n.d).

4.6 Limitations

This study has aimed for an objective standpoint when reviewing the sources and data but the research process should still be carried out with limitations in mind. Qualitative content analysis involves engagement with large amounts of data which can be time-demanding (Robson and McCartan, 2016: 356). For this reason, the study utilizes keywords to prioritize which parts of the texts to analyze and to retrieve information related to the research question. However, it is essential to ensure fair representation of the material studied (Scheyvens, 2014: 62). The policy and its accompanying documents were produced with a specific purpose and the researcher is therefore transparent about the application of the coding protocol and keywords.

Furthermore, the interpretation of the data is subjected to the researcher's own perception and expectation considering that the research question is concerned with latent content. This implies that the researcher is a part of the knowledge construction process which could in turn threaten the validity of the results (Robson and McCartan, 2016: 331, 354). For that reason, the study has aimed for an objective standpoint by practicing reflexivity throughout the research process to raise critical awareness. As suggested by Robson and McCartan (2016: 2), the researcher created a reflexive journal to highlight the immediate interpretations of findings before conducting the data analysis. The objective was to mitigate misrepresentation of the data by ensuring its alignment with the coding protocol. Secondly, the researcher has had dialogue with people to detect how one's own positionality impacts the interpretation of the data. This requires self-reflection regarding one's background, experience and expectations in relation to the study. In this way, the researcher aspires to a thoughtful involvement with the data and seeks to perform transparency throughout the research project.

5. Analysis

This chapter presents the analysis of the thesis. Through a feminist constructivist lens, it explores the dominant frames of women in climate change represented in Nepal's updated NAP 2021 and the accompanying documents. As argued by Detraz (2023), the various frames are occasionally used in tandem to describe women's position in adaptation. I, therefore, acknowledge that the categorizations below are not mutually exclusive. This thesis seeks to display the frames and shed light on how they, in turn, amplify or challenge gender-based stereotypes. For that reason, the representations have been presented in order of their recurrence in the data, highlighting how they either limit individual agency or challenge simplistic portrayals of women. By focusing on the content in terms of descriptions, the paper presents quotations under each section to clarify how the representations are explicitly evident in the data. The researcher refers to further quotations in Appendix III for readers who want to gain further insights into how some frames proved to be more dominant than others. The analysis begins by describing the frame of women as agents and continues to the representation of women as vulnerable, followed by women as caregivers. The fourth most dominant portrayal appeared during the inductive coding process which will be labeled women as left behind. The least frequently used representation out of the dominant ones was the knowledgeable frame.

5.1 Women as agents

The women as agents frame presented by Detraz (2023) was the most dominantly used representation in Nepal's NAP documents. The data emphasize conditions that limit women's capacity to independently engage in climate-related activities. It describes how the ability to utilize natural resources autonomously is inhibited as men maintain exclusive access and control of resource distribution. Instead of reinforcing essentialist reasonings, the descriptions address the power structures that harmfully hinder proactive roles in resource management. From a feminist constructivist lens, the descriptions create an understanding of where women are perceived to be blocked (Detraz, 2023: 165). This representation opposes commonly held gender assumptions concerning women's passivity because it illustrates how women are confronted with

forms of discrimination and marginalization which makes it difficult for them to participate in the first place (Singh et al., 2021: 961). Quotations are presented below.

“Addressing resource access issues related to forests, water and energy for women and marginalized groups” (MoFE, 2018: 16)

“The existence of multiple forms of discrimination and marginalization in Nepali society limits women's ability to utilize resources in their own right” (MoPE, 2017: 32)

“Nepal's REDD+ Strategy reported that decisions and resources are controlled by male elites, hindering the poor, Dalits, and women from exercising leadership” (GoN, 2021: 36).

Furthermore, several descriptions in the data refer to the necessity of women's economic empowerment which resonates with the women as agent frame (Detraz, 2023). The NAP document explains that limited access to financial resources has left them sidelined from making investments in environmentally-friendly farming methods. It states that the lack of inclusive financial institutions restricts female property rights and ownership which explains their absence in businesses that have the potential to enhance climate resilience. Accordingly, the data presents propositions of specific investments targeting women's involvement in the agricultural sector. These descriptions challenge the status quo regarding the common assumption that women are restricted by their own skill set (Detraz, 2023: 148). Based on the content, it indicates elements of social change in the representations as the data stresses how external factors obstruct their agency as well as the opportunity to participate in sustainable adaptation practices (Singh et al., 2021).

“Invest in women and farmer's empowerment to increase access to financial resources for the promotion of sustainable farming” (MoFE, 2021: 97)

“Promote joint land ownership to increase women's decision-making and access to credit for investment in agriculture” (MoFE, 2021: 97)

“Despite having interest and the necessary skills to establish micro enterprises, women face challenges as formal and informal credit

institutions are geared to funding property owners. Major credit institutions seek tangible collateral for loan and women have no or very low access to inherited property leaving them sidelined” (MoPE, 2017: 31)

5.2 Women as vulnerable

In line with Detraz's (2023) operationalization, the second most recurring description depicted women as a vulnerable group. Women are mentioned next to other high-risk groups such as marginalized, elderly, and the poor. The documents emphasized the high exposure to environmental hazards but in these descriptions, they did not acknowledge how vulnerability might intersect with other levels of oppression in society. With a sole emphasis on exposure, the frame amplifies gender norms considering that women become understood as one of the main groups that suffer the most from climate change (Detraz, 2023). Descriptions in the data did not contain many variations but were rather characterized by the same message within different formulations (see Appendix III).

“About 1.1 million people, including women, poor, and the marginalized, are highly exposed to climate change as they are classified as the most vulnerable in the country” (MoPE, 2017: 25)

“Female-headed households are one of the most vulnerable groups in society confronting many climate change challenges” (MoFE, 2021: 17)

In addition, representations in the NAP documents do frequently refer to the physical consequence of climate hazards by highlighting how women and other groups (children, girls, and elderly) have increased risk for climate-related fatalities. These explanations of women depict vulnerability as a solely embodied phenomenon, determined by the biological sex, leading to a form of “victimization” (Singh et al., 2021; Detraz, 2023: 58). The descriptions are focused on rigid gender binaries as they illustrate the opposite experience of men and women. The use of representations containing sex-disaggregated information about mortality (see Appendix III) underlines the simplistic conceptualizations. It differs from the women as agent frame because it does not provide explanations of how women's ability to respond to climate change is constrained by the socio-political environment (Detraz, 2023). In line with the feminist constructivist theory, this message of subordination in the latent content consequently disempowers those to whom the descriptions are aimed to, in this case, women.

“Flood-related fatalities are higher for girls and women than boys and men”
(GoN, 2021: 36)

“Exposure to climate change impacts is higher among children, girls/women, pregnant women, the elderly, and people with disabilities with increased mortality and morbidity” (MoFE, 2021: 61)

5.3 Women as caregivers

There is a returning representation in the data of how caretaking attributes make women more inclined to secure family needs during climate-induced changes. By positioning women within traditional gender roles as a protector and providers, such descriptions relate to the women as caregivers frame presented by Detraz (2023). The NAP documents explain how women conduct care duties within their households but do not acknowledge how such tasks are rooted in stereotypical feminine traits. For instance, the data underline how women take care of relatives after divorce or when their partner passes away. The data states that women perform self-sacrificing practices during food deficits in order to support family members' well-being, a task that is commonly associated with caretaking roles (Eastin and Dupuy, 2021: 84). From a feminist constructivist lens, it becomes evident that these illustrations in the data contribute to the reinforcement of taken-for-granted assumptions concerning women's inherent tendency to perform nurturing tasks based on biological dispositions (Detraz, 2023: 73).

“Women in the developing world tend to take care of their household when their male counterparts migrate for a long period, or if she is a widow or divorcee; or sometimes if she is the wife of a physically handicapped man”
(MoFE, 2021: 17)

“During food deficit periods, women consume less food in order to feed others and this has serious consequences on their health and nutritional requirement” (MoPE, 2017: 30)

Secondly, there are additional representations in the data that resonate with the women as caregivers frame. The NAP documents describe how women are endowed with the responsibility of collecting fuel, wood, and water which is commonly connected to care duties through reproductive labor (Singh et al., 2021: 966). They continue by stating

that climate change amplifies issues of water scarcity and degradation of forest ecosystems which poses a threat to the availability of natural resources and women need to allocate more time for these activities. To clarify, the descriptions relate to the women as a vulnerable frame, but differ in a way because it does not point to the physical impacts of climate change in terms of mortality or morbidity. Rather, they emphasize how climate change makes women vulnerable due to their existing care roles related to the collection of resources. This creates a shared understanding that women's position in climate change is entangled with and dictated by their role as “safe-keepers” (Detraz, 2023: 67-68). However, from a feminist constructivist lens, women are not born with the inherent duty to perform such tasks, but it is an idea produced in the social world and these descriptions tend to draw on feminized spaces (Detraz, 2023: 72). There are multiple times these descriptions appear in the data and the quotes presented below represent the broader picture.

“In most Nepali communities, women have the primary responsibility of collecting water and firewood” (MoPE, 2017: 30)

“Apart from facing a personal security issue, women are endowed with the responsibility of providing resources for themselves and their families” (MoPE, 2017: 30-31)

“Women are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change in the forestry sector because they play a major role in the collection of various forest products and are considered the primary users of forests in Nepal” (GoN, 2021: 20)

5.4 Women as left behind

The fourth most dominant frame appeared during the inductive coding process and I refer to it as women as left behind. For insights into how the frame has been operationalized, see Appendix II. The data describes how households develop alternative ways to earn income when the primary source of livelihood becomes demolished by climate change. A common explanation that emerged in the NAP documents was how male-out migration has been used as a coping strategy, predominantly in rural areas, leaving women with disproportionate workloads. Based on the data, women become increasingly responsible for household duties. These

descriptions resonate with some of the frames presented by Detraz (2023), particularly the ones related to caregiving. It reinforces ideas regarding specific roles women are assumed to play in the absence of men. However, the women as left behind contain distinct elements as it does not solely point to essentialist reasons behind adaptive strategies. As the data indicates, women are not staying only because of their position as caretakers. The NAP documents underline that it has been less challenging for men to search for alternative ways to earn income during environmental disasters and they use migration as a coping strategy. Women's caregiving role is a part of the aftermath of this process, but as stated in the descriptions, there are additional constraints, such as lack of livelihood diversification, that explain why women do not migrate in the first place. In this new frame, women's position in climate change is governed by migration patterns which, according to the findings, appears to be a highly gendered process.

“The increasing need for livelihood diversification triggers outmigration (predominantly men, with 12% women migrant workers)” (MoPE, 2017: 30)

“Climate change has been a push factor for men to seek employment overseas or neighboring countries leaving behind women to carry out all farming and household responsibilities in rural areas” (MoFE, 2021: 60)

Lastly, the data describe that male out-migration triggers shifts in the labor market where the “feminization of farming” makes women take over previously male-dominated practices in the agricultural sector. This contributes to insights regarding how women not only play a passive role in the absence of men. The descriptions show how male-out migration gives women more autonomy in line with an increasing number of female-headed households. However, as the descriptions lack a detailed explanation of the gender-migration-climate nexus, it does not specify if this change was an outcome of women's own choice, meaning that no conclusions can be made on whether this increases individual agency or not.

“[...] labour migration has created agricultural labour scarcity which has resulted in more fallow land in Nepal and increased trend of women participation in agriculture” (MoFE, 2021: 16)

“Women in Nepal make up to 73% of the agricultural work force and the country is experiencing a trend of ‘feminization of the agricultural sector’ because of male-out migration” (GoN, 2021: 36)

5.5 Women as knowledgeable

The fifth dominant representation in the data of women's role in climate change relates to the women as knowledgeable frame. Women are described to withhold distinct knowledge, highlighting their expertise as different from other groups. The NAP document emphasizes that this proficiency needs to be translated into adaptation programs and projects to effectively respond to hazardous events. This implies that their role as knowledge providers will strengthen the ability to design efficient adaptation measures to the adverse impacts of climate change (Khadka et al., 2015: 1474). The description also states that this will, in turn, develop a sense of agency implying that they will be able to act in a way that reflects their own interest. These findings entail that the social construction of women challenges conventional assumptions of women as voiceless, and in need of saving. The utilization of this frame contributes to an understanding of women as possessing valuable insights concerning climate change and potential coping strategies (Detraz, 2023: 98, 165).

“Integrate distinctive knowledge of women and indigenous groups into programs or policies to strengthen climate resilience and facilitate the process of building their ‘agency’ through GESI responsive climate measures and actions” (MoFE, 2021: 102)

The women as knowledgeable frame argues that women should gain more prominent roles in titles connected to climate-related professions. A way for policy-makers to demonstrate how women's expertise is valued is through advocacy of meaningful participation (Detraz, 2023: 106; Khadka et al., 2015: 767-768). Representations that resonate with this argument were found in the data where the NAP documents emphasize the involvement of women in leadership positions related to adaptation efforts. A more recurring description was women's participation in climate-related decision-making, explaining how previous efforts in the NAP process failed to integrate women into climate change agenda-setting. This frame is connected to the women as agent frame by underlying women's active role, however, it differs as it emphasizes

expertise as valuable for designing CCA policies (Detraz, 2023). As discussed in section 3.2.3, policymakers often motivate women's involvement in policy-making based on expertise in female-dominated sectors such as forestry and agriculture which amplifies traditional notions of gender knowledge (Detraz, 2023:105-106). These arguments were not found in the data because they did not point to reasons behind women's knowledge. The conceptualizations used in the NAP documents contribute to a transformative understanding that challenges contemporary power structures and refrains from the premise that women are inherently reactive and not proactive.

“In the first stage of NAP formulation, representation of women and vulnerable groups in the working groups remained limited [...]. As the NAP process moves forward, it will be critically important to ensure gender balance in participation and influence over decision making” (MoFE, 2018: 19)

“Ensure meaningful representation of women, Indigenous Peoples, and youth in a leadership role in climate adaptation planning and implementation” (MoFE, 2021: 102)

6. Discussion

Five dominant frames have been detected in the data which supports the feminist constructivist view that there are multiple understandings around women's position in adaptation. While previous research argues that women have mainly been portrayed as vulnerable (Singh et al., 2021; Rai et al., 2021; Shehwar, 2021: 214), the results demonstrate that a more multifaceted integration has been transmitted into Nepal's NAP documents. Considering that both the agent and knowledge frame was evident in the data, it implies that more progressive ideas regarding women as informed but simultaneously blocked have come to shape climate policy.

Nevertheless, descriptions that perpetuate gender stereotypes were still evident in the data. The government of Nepal and its related ministries interacted with norms of female passivity regarding vulnerability which serves to reinforce the ideas of women-climate interconnectedness. The vulnerability frame depicted women as a homogenized group, disregarding how class, caste, or factors of inequity interact with

vulnerability (Detraz, 2023: 33). The analysis revealed that essentialist reasoning remains, such as the emphasis on women's nurturing traits. The representations within the caregiving frame failed to acknowledge how the gender division of household labor and safe-keeping duties are rooted in socially-established norms (Detraz, 2023: 67).

The findings were based on the operationalization of Detraz's (2023) analytical framework and the women as agents' frame appeared as the most evident representation. However, descriptions did only emphasize spaces where women's ability to participate in adaptation is blocked and did not recognize spaces where women are currently involved or participating. These descriptions have contributed to a transformative understanding of how current power structures need to be challenged to achieve gender-just adaptation practices in the future. Nevertheless, women's proactive position in present-day adaptation remains unnoticed. The findings contribute to a clearer understanding of how the frames presented by Detraz (2023) appear in climate policy. Even though some representations appeared to be more dominant than others, it did not imply that they covered all aspects that were raised in the operationalization of each frame.

Lastly, the analysis chapter did also find that the analytical framework of Detraz (2023) needs to be refined. Through inductive coding, an additional representation appeared in the data that described how women are affected by male-out migration which proves to be a highly gendered governed process. The emergence of climate-induced migration has also been reflected in the social construction of women. Description of how this affects those that stay at home, both with increased workload and more autonomy in agricultural practices, contributes to new insights into how women are coping with climate change. The findings of the new frame can be included in Detraz's (2023) analytical framework to broaden the understanding of how policymakers represent women in contemporary adaptation policy.

7. Conclusions

This thesis aimed to explore the dominant frames of women in climate change represented throughout Nepal's updated NAP. The study used qualitative content analysis and operationalized the social construction of women into categories based on Detraz's (2023) analytical framework. The study found five dominant frames in the data which were analyzed through the lens of feminist constructivism.

The frame of women as agents was the most recurring representation in the documents. This social construction challenged taken-for-granted assumptions of women being restrained by their skills by drawing attention to the contemporary distribution of resources and (in)access to financial institutions. The second most recurring frame depicted women as vulnerable. The descriptions contained disempowering effects as they classified women as a high-risk group that is disproportionately exposed to climate hazards, without recognition of how vulnerability intersects with other levels of oppression. This was followed by the caregiving frame which amplified essentialist reasoning concerning nurturing practices during natural hazards.

The fourth frame appeared during the inductive coding process which has been labeled women as left behind. It revealed how women's position in climate change is dictated by migration patterns. These descriptions amplify gender stereotypes of passivity, where they are expected to stay when family members migrate. At the same time, the data indicated how this process creates new opportunities as women gain more autonomy in previously male-dominated tasks. Lastly, women as knowledgeable appeared to be the fifth most dominant frame. It described how women withhold valuable insights that should be translated into future planning and decision-making to strengthen climate resilience as well as develop a sense of agency.

The findings reveal that there are many ways in which the government of Nepal and its related ministries have described the complex link between women and climate change. Previous studies underline how there has been a single focus on vulnerability in Nepal's CCA policies and this study contributes with new insights into how women are not merely seen as vulnerable victims or agents of change. On the contrary, women's representation in Nepal's adaptation policy is more multifaceted than previously assumed.

Avenues for future research

This thesis has focused on how women have been represented in Nepal's NAP documents. To begin with, the study expanded the scope of Detraz (2023) analytical framework, making it possible for future research to apply a broader lens in the investigation of specific frames. Additionally, further research on why some representations appear to be more dominant than others would expand our knowledge of how Nepal's historical setting marked by political instability generates certain views on women's position in adaptation. This would provide deeper insights into why some ideas around gender stereotypes are subject to change whilst others persist, requiring additional analysis of the specific context. Furthermore, this thesis treated the NAP documents as a unified entity because all papers were used to inform the final policy. The documents were also different in length, explaining the unbalanced amount of references to women's concerns. However, investigating the evolution of women's representation between documents at different points in time would be a way for future research to reveal specific signs of norm shifts. For instance, Nepal's NAP will be revised in 2031 which paves the way for a comparative study between NAP policies. Further research is also needed on how the representations in Nepal's adaptation policy have been replicated in development projects and programs. This would generate insights about how the women as agents and women as knowledgeable frame become translated into action on the ground. This could potentially reveal the distinction between the intended and real effects of climate policy.

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Appendices

Appendix I - Document analyzed

<p>MoPE= Ministry of Population and Environment. (2017). Synthesis of Stocktaking Report for National Adaptation Plan (NAP) Formulation Process in Nepal. Kathmandu, p. 1-61. Available at: https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/NAPC/Documents/Parties/Final%20Technical%20Synthesis%20Report.pdf</p>
<p>MoFE= Ministry of Forest and Environment. (2018). Nepal's National Adaptation Plan (NAP) Process: Reflections on lessons learned and the way forward. Government of Nepal, NAP Global Network, Action on Climate Today (ACT), and Practical Action Nepal, p. 1-45. Available at: https://napglobalnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/napgn-en-2018-nepal-nap-process.pdf</p>
<p>GoN= Government of Nepal. (2021). National Adaptation Plan (NAP) 2021-2050: Summary For Policymakers, p. 1-44. Ministry of Forestry and Environment, Government of Nepal https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/NAP_Nepal.pdf</p>
<p>MoFE= Ministry of Forest and Environment. (2021). Vulnerability and Risk Assessment and Identifying Adaptation Options: Summary for Policy Makers. Government of Nepal. Kathmandu, Nepal., p. 1-113. Available at: https://www.mofe.gov.np/uploads/documents/vulnerability-repnew1630571413pdf-2940-766-1658827788.pdf</p>

Appendix II - Operationalization of frames of women in climate change

Codes	Category/Traits	Frames/Themes
Exposed to environmental hazards, women in natural disasters, high-risk group, unprotected, most vulnerable, mortality, morbidity, poverty, low-income, powerless, rural livelihoods, low literacy rate, poor health	Victims, helpless, passive, in need of saving	Women as vulnerable
Mothers, children/babies, husband, wife, raising children, parenting, worry about family, care activities, provides assistance, sick family	Care responsibilities, motherhood, reproductive role	Women as caregivers

members, travel to secure resources, fetching water, collect wood, provide food, cooking		
Withholding climate change knowledge, expertise, proficiency, well-informed actors, need for female leadership, more female politicians, educate others, participation and representation in decision-making and policy making	Climate leaders, knowledge creators and providers	Women as knowledgeable
Involved in environmental management, participants, engaged in programmes/projects, key players, practical skill-set, laborers, farmers, experienced, female-empowerment Face challenges, having less resources, less rights, less ownership, less decision-making power, economic constraints, political constraints, social constraints, exclusion, marginalization, gender-norms, discrimination, underrepresentation	Proactive, influential, individual agency Sidelined, blocked, hindered	Women as agents
<i>Livelihood diversification, male-outmigration, labor migration, overseas employment, more female-headed households, increased autonomy</i>	<i>Abandonment</i>	<i>Women as left behind</i>

Appendix III - Additional citations from the data

<p>Women as vulnerable</p>	<p>“Flood-related fatalities are 13.3 per 1000 girls aged 2-9 years, 9.4 per 1000 boys aged 2-9 years, 6.1 per 1000 adult women, and 4.1 per 1000 adult men in Nepal” (MoFE, 2021: 61)</p> <p>“Children, girls/women, pregnant women, the elderly, and people with disabilities have higher levels of mortality and morbidity due to climate change impacts” (GoN, 2021: 37)</p> <p>“The impact is generally higher for children, women, the elderly, expectant mothers, people with chronic health problems, and disadvantaged population groups” (MoFE, 2021: 57)</p> <p>“Especially vulnerable are those who are entirely dependent on tourism as their only livelihood option. Moreover, with the increasing involvement of women in the tourism sector, there is also a higher risk of their exposure to climate change” (MoPE, 2017: 46).</p> <p>“The frequency of occurrence of these hazards is increasing, and farmers view this as not only damaging crops and natural resources but also affecting vulnerable groups such as women, children and the elderly” (MoPE, 2017: 13)</p>
<p>Women as caregivers</p>	<p>“Prolonged dry seasons will result in drastic reductions in the availability of grasses and other sources of food, as well as drinking water for livestock, forcing women to travel farther and longer for the collection of fodder and drinking water” (MoPE, 2017: 37).</p> <p>“Women might need to spend more time fetching water when nearby water sources dry and yield less discharge ” (MoPE, 2017: 55-56)</p> <p>“Decreased availability of natural resources leads to girls spending longer hours collecting firewood/water, sometimes even resulting in school dropouts [...]. It is reported that women worked up to 18 hours a day collecting fuel, fodder, and water” (MoFE, 2021: 61)</p>
<p>Women as knowledgeable</p>	<p>“Build women's capacity for effective participation in key policymaking positions at all levels” (MoFe, 2021: 102)</p> <p>“Enhance technical and institutional capacity on climate change at local and provincial levels i.e build farmers, IPs, youth, and women's capacity for effective participation in key policymaking positions” (MoFe, 2021: 102)</p>

<p>Women as agents</p>	<p>“[...] social and cultural factors along with a non-supportive policy and institutional environment have not contributed to empowering agriculture-dependent women or increasing their ownership and control over productive resources” (MoFe, 2021: 16)</p> <p>“[...] it is the socio-economic construction of a patriarchal society that affects the accessibility of resources, thus creating a dissonance between vulnerability and the adaptive capacities of men and women” (MoPE, 2017: 31)</p> <p>“Women’s scant access to decision-making roles, ownership of property, land rights, access to information and education put them at a further disadvantage” (MoPE, 2017: 29)</p> <p>“Devise affirmative measures for gender equality and empowerment of women by challenging discriminatory norms, values, and practices that intensify vulnerability” (MoFe, 2021: 102)</p> <p>“Recognizing the differentiated roles that women and men play as natural resource managers and food providers, there is the necessity of engaging women and men in early warning systems and disaster preparedness programmes that must reach the most disadvantage segments of society” (MoPE, 2017: 31)</p> <p>“The MR&R system can help the government track the participation of women and vulnerable groups in the NAP process, and identify opportunities to enhance their equitable access to resources and benefits from adaptation interventions” (GoN, 2021: 39)</p>
<p>Women as left behind</p>	<p>“Male outmigration has a multi-dimensional impact on women's role in agriculture” (MoFe, 2021: 16)</p> <p>“The migration of young household members in a family increases the sensitivity of those left behind (elderly, children, and women) and leads to an increase in female-headed households (de-facto household heads)” (MoFe, 2021: 106)</p> <p>“As more men migrate than women, the number of female-headed households has steadily increased, from 13.6 percent in 1995/96 to 19.6 percent in 2003/04 and 26.6 percent in 2010/2011, a trend that is particularly pronounced in rural areas” (MoFe, 2021: 2-3)</p>