



Women, Poverty and Climate Change: Sources

Fact: Global warming is the increase in the average temperature of the Earth's atmosphere and oceans. The Earth's average temperature rose about 1.1° Fahrenheit in the 20th century.

Sources: Nasa Goddard Institute for Space Studies (GISS); http://www.giss.nasa.gov/research/features/200111_altscenario/

"Definition for Global Warming - What Is Global Warming?" *Time for Change*. N.p., n.d. Web. 12 Aug. 2012. <http://timeforchange.org/definition-for-global-warming-what-is-global-warming>

Facts: Sea levels are rising, arctic ice is melting, seawater is becoming more acidic, there are heavier rainfalls, and the frequency and strength of hurricanes has increased as well as the number of extreme droughts. As a direct result of these changes, the ecosystems have changed with significant negative impact on animals, plants and crop productivity.

Source: "Effects of Climate Change Today." *Windows to the Universe*. National Earth Science Teachers Association, n.d. Web. 12 Aug. 2012. http://www.windows2universe.org/earth/climate/cli_effects.html

Facts: The Earth's atmosphere contains gases that trap heat near its surface, AKA greenhouse gases. They let the sun's rays enter and stop some heat from escaping to outer space. The main source of greenhouse gases comes from fossil fuels.

Source: "Cause and Effect for Global Warming." *Time for Change*. N.p., n.d. Web. 12 Aug. 2012. <http://timeforchange.org/cause-and-effect-for-global-warming>

Fact: In our everyday life we rely on fossil fuels for everything from driving our cars, to heating our homes. The production system also uses enormous amounts of fossil fuels.

Source: "Fossil Fuels." *What You Need to Know About Energy*. The National Academies, n.d. Web. 12 Aug. 2012. <http://needtoknow.nas.edu/energy/energy-sources/fossil-fuels/>

Fact: However, not everybody is equally responsible for the production of heat-trapping gases. There is a direct correlation between wealth and the use of fossil fuels. Since the industrial revolution, the wealthiest countries have produced most of the green gasses.

Source: "Debate: Developed Countries Have a Higher Obligation to Combat Climate Change." *Debatepedia*. N.p., n.d. Web. 12 Aug. 2012. http://debatepedia.idebate.org/en/index.php/Debate:_Developed_countries_have_a_higher_obligation_to_combat_climate_change

Facts:

- People from poor countries, especially those in rural areas, are "disproportionately affected by environmental degradation", and within any given country, the poor are more vulnerable to the effects of environmental hazards.
- In the US, people who earn less than \$10,000 per year are producing 4 times less CO₂ emissions than people who earn more than \$75,000.
- Low-income people, who have contributed the least to the climate change, are the most affected by it and at the same time are excluded from the dialogue about it.

Source: Oliver, Rachel. "Rich, Poor and Climate Change." *CNN*. N.p., 18 Feb. 2008. Web. 12 Aug. 2012. <http://edition.cnn.com/2008/BUSINESS/02/17/eco.class/>

Facts: This is known as the Climate Gap—climate change does not affect everyone equally: the wealthiest have more resources to protect themselves from the negative impacts of climate change, while those who have been historically disenfranchised, such as women, the poor, and people of color are affected the most because they are the “least able to anticipate, cope with, resist and recover from the worst effects of climate change”

Extreme weather events such as heat waves, droughts and floods are expected to increase in their frequency and intensity in the next hundred years.

The prices of basic necessities are expected to skyrocket as the climate continues to change: food, water, electricity and gas will increase tremendously. This increase on the cost of basic necessities will affect the poor the most, even as they already expend a high proportion of their income on these basic necessities. With the high prices of gas and electricity, the poor will have less access to transportation and air conditioning, thus leaving them more exposed to extreme environmental conditions and the resulting illnesses.

Climate change threatens to exacerbate dirty air. Higher temperatures hasten chemical interactions between nitrogen oxide, volatile organic gases and sunlight that lead to increases in ambient ozone concentrations in urban areas.

Source: Morello-Frosch, Rachel, Manuel Pastor, James Sadd, and Seth B. Shonkoff. "The Climate Gap Inequalities in How Climate Change Hurts Americans & How to Close the Gap."

Facts: Low-income people, people of color, and immigrants are the most impacted by the severe weather events, heat waves, and increases in disease rates that characterize Earth’s changing climate. A very clear example of the Climate Gap, which is the difference in impact between poor and wealthy people, is the disproportionate damage that Hurricane Katrina had on women, people of color and low-income communities.

Lack of access to safe, affordable, and adequate housing impacts many. However, women bear the brunt of housing related poverty, discrimination, and displacement. Climate change will only exacerbate these problems.

Source: Rojas-Cheatham, Ann, Dana Ginn Paredes, Shana Griffin, Aparna Shah, and Eveline Shen. “Looking Both Ways: Women’s Lives at the Crossroads of Reproductive Justice and Climate Justice.” *Asian Communities for Reproductive Justice*. 2009.

Facts: “Climate change directly affects the water cycle and, through it, the quantity and quality of water resources available to meet human and environmental demands”. Water shortages will

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affect every aspect of life, such as health, sanitation, food production and other industries that also use water in their process. Women, who are already disadvantaged through gender inequity and higher levels of poverty, are more dependent on reliable water resources in their vicinity because of their role in food production and family responsibilities

Source: "Climate Change and Water: An Overview From the World Water Development Report 3: Water in a Changing World." United Nations World Water Assessment Programme, 2009. Web.

Fact: Again, the poor are more likely to live in areas with more air pollution, and have a higher level of health issues for this reason. One good example is that of already existing disparities in childhood asthma prevalence and mortality, where poor children and children of color are the disproportionately impacted.

Source: Das, Alina. "The Asthma Crisis in Low-income communities of color: Using the Law as a Tool for Promoting Public Health". http://www.law.nyu.edu/ecm_dlv1/groups/public/@nyu_law_website__journals__review_of_law_and_social_change/documents/documents/ecm_pro_064018.pdf

Fact: Hunger and malnutrition, respiratory conditions, vector-borne diseases, and water & food related diseases will be some of the health problems that will be exacerbated by climate change.

Source: "Health Effects." *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*. N.p., 29 Nov. 2010. Web. 12 Aug. 2012. <http://www.cdc.gov/climateandhealth/effects/default.htm>
