

SHECAN: A Feminist Climate-Health Action Network for the Asia Pacific

Why this Matters – and why now

Climate change is reshaping lives across the Asia Pacific – but its **health impacts are not gender neutral**. Women and girls face disproportionate and compounding risks: higher maternal and neonatal complications during heatwaves and disasters; increased exposure to water and vector-borne disease; food insecurity and malnutrition; disrupted access to sexual and reproductive health services; climate stressors adding heightened risk of gender-based violence and significant mental health strain for caregivers.

Yet these gendered harms remain **largely invisible in policy and decision-making**. Across the Asia Pacific and beyond, **health data** outlining the gendered impacts and risks of climate events **is not routinely used** to inform national adaptation planning. **Women's voices are also largely marginalised** in policy dialogue and development. Together, this **results in policies** that are neither designed by women nor adequately protect them from the disproportionate harms of changing climate.

The consequences are significant – and preventable.

A rare and critical policy window is open now – creating a time-sensitive opportunity for philanthropic partners to help shape outcomes. Multiple Asia Pacific nations are actively updating national adaptation plans, adaptation strategies disaster preparedness frameworks, and climate financing pipelines. Decisions being made now will shape health and climate resilience, and by extension the future of women and girls across the Asia Pacific, for decades.

Gender responsive health priorities must be actioned now to improve the lives of women, girls and communities across the region for generations to come.

What SHECAN will do with feminist philanthropic support

SHECAN will deliver transformative change across people, systems, and policy:

Shift power to women and girls

- Support women- and youth-led climate health advocacy, leadership training, and grassroots action – enabling stronger representation in climate decision-making.
- Resource feminist movements and community networks to participate meaningfully in climate decision-making.
- Amplify lived experience through impact stories, advocacy toolkits, and regional learning fora.

Build systems that count women's lives

- Generate gender-disaggregated data to reveal climate-related health risks – making the invisible visible.
- Establish gender health vulnerability surveillance systems that governments can sustain and update – to inform policy and investment decisions.
- Strengthen institutional capacity within ministries and health systems to use gendered data – not just collect it – driving more responsive and effective health systems.

Change policy and finance

- Convene multisectoral policy labs where women, civil society, and government co design climate adaptation solutions.
- Integrate women's health priorities into national adaptation plans, disaster preparedness frameworks, and health system strategies – ensuring lasting policy impact.
- Develop **investment cases** that demonstrate social and economic returns of gender-responsive climate health action – supporting stronger funding decisions.



The impact feminist funders make possible

Supporting SHECAN enables philanthropic partners to:

- Protect the health of women and girls facing the sharpest impacts of the climate crisis.
- Institutionalise gender-responsive climate policy – not as the exception, but as the norm.
- Strengthen Pacific feminist leadership, knowledge sovereignty, and regional solidarity.
- Create a scalable model for feminist climate health action across Small Island and climate-vulnerable states – with potential for global application.
- Ensure climate finance works **for women, with women,** and on women's terms.

What your support will achieve

Philanthropic investment in SHECAN will:

- Enable the first gender-responsive climate-health assessments in multiple Pacific island nations
- Support women leaders to directly shape national climate policies
- Strengthen health systems to better respond to climate risks
- Influence climate adaptation plans and funding decisions across the region.

Together, this will improve health outcomes for women and girls across the region and create a scalable model for climate action globally.

What makes SHECAN different – and essential to support

SHECAN is a **feminist, community-led action network designed to embed an equity-focused approach to power and resources.** It is distinctive because:

- **It is Pacific-led and feminist by design.** Women, girls, youth, and community leaders are collaborators – not subjects – shaping research questions, interpreting data, and co-creating policy solutions using feminist participatory action research.
- **It makes women's health visible where it has been ignored.** SHECAN will deliver the first comprehensive, context-specific gendered health vulnerability assessments for climate change in the Asia Pacific – starting with Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, and Indonesia – addressing a critical gap between evidence and action.
- **It bridges the gap between feminist evidence and action – ensuring insights generated by communities lead to real world change.** SHECAN starts with community-generated evidence, building to multisectoral policy labs, feeding into national adaptation plans, and developing investment cases that demonstrate the social and economic returns of protecting women's health.
- **It is embedded within real decision-making processes.** National Ministries of Health, provincial health authorities, and regional climate bodies are formal partners, ensuring women's priorities are reflected in policy, budgets, and implementation – with clear pathways for philanthropic support to accelerate this work.
- **It strengthens feminist infrastructure, not extractive systems.** funding flows through trusted regional networks, including the Pacific Island Climate Action Network (PICAN) and their 250+ member organisations across the region – building lasting leadership, advocacy capacity, and institutional memory.
- **It honours culture, care, and sustainability.** Community participation is resourced; traditional protocols are respected; local people lead; and delivery models prioritise low emissions, local employment, and shared ownership.