

## COVID-19 AND COPRODUCTION OF INJUSTICES: A FEMINIST READING OF CRISES THAT OVERLAP

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### Abstract

Since 2020, discussions have also dominated overlapping global socio-ecological crises related to climatic change and the COVID-19 pandemic. The interrelationships expose structural inequalities and systemically marginalization across sites and scales. While continued climate change intensifies, interlinks and interconnections and compounds and creates new forms of injustice and stress, new challenges, vulnerabilities and burdens have been co-creating the emergence of COVID-19 as well as enhances the old ones. An intersectional analysis of these overlapping but uneven global crises shows the importance of simultaneous study and addressing by a feminist perspective. This provides a more nuanced understanding of the structural, material and discursive co-production of injustices.

**Keywords:** Climate change; covid-19; pandemic; inter-sectionalist; injustice

The discussion, imagination and reality lived from the beginning of 2020 onwards dominated two overlapping global socio-ecological crises: the climate and the COVID-19 pandemic. At the beginning of 2021, over 105 million confirmed cases with more than 2 million deaths and counts had been reported by the World Health Organization. This is because of the lack of accurate data collection, reporting and monitoring of the effects of the virus in many countries. The statistics are probably worse. Similarly, the onslaught of climate change continued throughout the world, leading to more severe and frequent thermal stress, wildfires, hurricanes/cyclones, drought, sea level increase and floods. For example in the USA, Australia and the Amazon, wildfires raged only in 2020; the flood of one third of Bangladesh; the Atlantic, Pacific and the Indian Oceans battered over a dozen more than average tropical hurricane countries; and Arctic ice sheets melted at record rates, raising the level of the oceans. In the face of varied climatic events, communities have struggled to deal with the pandemic of compound crises, causing disasters, sufferings and mortality in all countries and communities. The relationship between climate and the COVID-19 pandemic exposes the structural inequities and systemic exclusion across scales and sites. In processes and outcomes of climate change and the pandemic, there are similarities and differences. Geographers and other scholars have written about the worsening of historical climate change, which has uniform and unequal impacts, as capitalism, colonialism, world racism and ongoing dispossessions have contributed. Any attention given to the diverse climatic injustices shows that systemic and structural inequality is involved. Likewise, the COVID-19 pandemic spread rapidly throughout the world. Both climate change and COVID-19 arose from the exploitation of capitalism in an environmentally sound way, the systemic reduction of the human and human

nature and the establishment of the zone of sacrifice where profit was a priority over people and planetary welfare (McKibbin, 2020; Kolinjivadi, 2020; Peto et al., 2020). As continuous climate change amplifies, compounds and creates new injustices and stresses all interrelated and interrelated, new challenges, vulnerabilities and burden are co-created by a COVID-19 pandemic, while strengthening the old ones (Manzanedo & Manning, 2020; Watts et al., 2020). A recent Lancet editorial argues that "Indeed, efforts to prepare for future pandemics are likely to be undermined without looking at current and future impacts of climate change" (Lee et al., 2021). While scientists and policymakers comparison the climate crisis with the COVID-19 pandemic (Sultana 2021; McKibbin & Fernando, 2020; Evans et al, 2020; Zambrano, et al., 2020; Oldekop et al., 2020; Searle & Turnbull,2020), a feminist interpretation, together rather than separately, shows how people are and how people are, this fosters more nuanced understandings and explanations. In this paper I show how much it is important to bring an intersection lens to better analyze pandemic and climate injustices' overlapping but uneven crises. Similarities existed across the two areas, such as gender differences in increased unpaid care, differential risks and exposure, inconsistent access to information and security measures, increased sex-based violence, and exacerbations in livelihoods insecurity and financial precarity. The research literature not only informs my reflections and analyzes, but also my situation as a scientist in or from the world of the South, where there has been a deep climate disaster and a pandemic. Climate change occurs for many industrialized worlds now or in the future; but climate change has already happened for decades in much of the post-colonial world, and lived experiences and climate break-up speeches are not novel. Only countries and regions have been compounded by the pandemic. Whilst the pandemic is a rapid and immediate public health crisis with widespread deaths, morbidity and mental health challenges, climate change has a health impact that slows down violence (Hare, 2016). This slowing violence occurred for decades, with heat stress increasing, poor air quality inside and outside, poor drinking water quality, trauma caused by displacement, etc. This is context-driven but experienced cross-sectionally. The climate change as well as the pandemic often affect the same communities hardest, because zones of world colonialism, imperialism, and injustices have already become the sacrifice areas (Zografos & Robbins, 2020).

The experiences of people at the front should better inform global discussions, often among powerful and privileged elites, often in men's or white spaces (Rodríguez-Morales, 2020). Yet many of the world's leading communities are colored communities in terms of the pandemic and climatic breakdown. Similarly, there are disproportionate gender imbalances in decision-making and leadership roles in both pandemic and climate justice. The feminist reading of these crises is even more powerful than before or if every problem has been analyzed separately rather than together. Trifecta of cross-sectional patriarchy and pandemic crises and climate collapse aggravates differentiated weaknesses and multiplicities at various time and space levels of systemic inequality. Globally, climate justice is concerned with changes in systems and tackling structural inequalities and power systems that sustain them (Di Chiro, 2011; Forsyth, 2014; Gardiner, 2011; Libster, 2021; Roberts & Parks, 2009; Robinson & Shine, 2018; Schlosberg & Collins, 2014). Critical climate justice approaches address issues of responsibility, exposure,

vulnerability, and ethics. To have justice, it becomes imperative to first identify injustices that exist and then address underlying causes of them. Research and action on climate justice, such as pandemic research and action, therefore require cross-sectional approaches to full accountability for a number of systemic injustices that overlap and intermingle. With the global climate collapse, more serious epidemics and pandemics will emerge and concurrent public health crises will not seem like an anomaly in the 2020 event (Leach et al., 2021; UN Women & UNEP, 2020). Students begin to listen to insights in different strands, particularly in the field of climate science, of critical feminist research (Acha, 2019; Dew et al., 2015; Djoudi et al., 2016; Kaijser & Kronsell, 2014; Ojha 2014; Tschakert & Machado, 2012). Since social groups are not homogenous, but have been largely treated as these in a variety of policies, insights such as the intersectional dimension have become more representative and accountable in helping nuance data in order to explain the reality in the ground of overlapping axes of oppression and differences (Godfrey, 2016; Crenshaw, 1991; Rodóde-zárate & Baylina, 2018; Yuval-Davis, 2016). Gender, race/ethnicity, class, disability, age, sexuality, religion, caste, and the status of the migrant are some of the most frequent axes of intersection differences or oppression. The value of intersectionality in research is many but largely because it is an additional value (in political language) that requires broken data but also lies behind these data, and it can therefore help develop policies and projects that do not further marginalize people and replicate socio-ecological inequalities. It requires a close understanding of local contexts and complexities as well as insight into changing science and theory (e.g. feminist scholarship, theories of critical races, postcolonialism, decolonial and indigenous bonds, etc) (Sultana, 2021). The importance of space has also been proved by geographers and women from the Global South in analyzing the spatially different groups of men and women, which also make intersectional differences co-constitutive of colonial, imperialist and modernizing histories (Mckittrick, 2006; Mohanty, 2003; Mollett & Faria, 2018; Patil, 2013; Radcliffe, 2018; Valentine, 2007).

Attention to the spatial intersectionality shows the differentiation of the pandemic in different locations. Includes the increase in anti-Asian sentiments and crimes in the United States, increased anti-Muslim discrimination in the Americas and India, colourful health disparities and ageism and capturing worldwide. In the shuts down or pushed out of work or were forced to continue working in risky circumstances precarious workers, racial minority or poor community members, like domestic workers, migrant workers, farmer workers and food preparers, were particularly hard hit (Theurl, 2020). Many precarious workers have facing increased exposures from crowded living arrangement, lack of access to health care, stigmatization and exclusion based on race, ethnicity and migrant status (International Organisation for Migration 2020), or have been prevented to send referrals to the families in foreign countries or have been forced to leave their country of occupation. Therefore geographers have called for urgently to pay attention to the effects of COVID-19 in global mortality on those who have several intersectional loads and the spatial inequalities (Ho & Maddrell, 2021). The differences between countries, especially among ethnic minorities, refugees, displaced people, and those facing structural contextual racism and barriers, are the burdens, risks, exposures and death rates. Racialized minorities and immigrants in the U,

where Black communities reported higher morbidity and mortality, faced greater exposure and risk (Eaves & Al-Hindi, 2020). In contrast, wealthier people are spreading COVID-19 with global travel and locking and escape capabilities (also traveling, if necessary), increasing disparities between classes where COVID-19 is referred to as the "rich man's disease" (Valletta et al., 2020). The pandemic with private jets, more isolated houses and better access to tax and health resources usually made the wealthier people better at the time (BBC, 2020). The cross-section lens enables a better understanding of those who are dealing with, and must be adapted to, a pandemic and climate change," complex power structures and lived experiences. It helps to explain certain root causes of inequities, oppressions and power structures that play a role in creating varied vulnerabilities, hazards and adaptive abilities. It highlights climatic injustice contours at sites and across scales and illuminates the simultaneous crises. Such attention also provides a better understanding of the living experiences of climate effects, humanizing climate change, which is still widely approached technically and scientifically. The pandemic has traveled and continues to destroy lives and livelihoods of differentiated community members can be analyzed in similar ways. There are global limits on the capacity to handle and adjust at the individual and household levels, but for marginalized and oppressed groups they are more difficult. Differences of decision-making and bargaining power within households and communities, access to knowledge and resources and asset bases therefore compound different vulnerabilities which are experienced individually or communally, but are produced and strengthened structurally and systemically. The absence of analysis and resolution of intersectionality can result in more difficult results and reduction in this current economic environment. With increasing international research on climatic adaptation, resilience and loss & damage, researchers are urging them to reclaim the opportunity to conduct justice-focused, accountable and transformative research using careful and thoughtful intersectional approaches. This is not easy or agreed, but more rigorous conversations have to take place, hopefully without reproducing either victimization or narratives of damage or euphemistically called poverty porn (Ogier, et al., 2009; Wilson, 2010). The same can be said of the pandemic scenario that continues to unravel and evolve. But all research at cross-sections must be based locally and take local axes of oppression, use and marginalisation into account. It must be contextual, therefore. In one context, what makes sense may not be in another. For some time now, relations between sexes and gender inequality have been a key element in cross-sectional research in international politics and academic research. Gender, however, is not static, relational and consists of a variety of contextual power relations. Gender is not isolated from other axes of power relations but co-forms the respective axes of privilege and oppression, such as classes and race/ethnicity. It doesn't mean an endless array of social variables, it means addressing broad patriarchal power relations through the main axes of oppression and social vulnerabilities and marginalization relevant to each context. As a consequence, there is significant writing on the differential consequences on women in various social and geographical locations of the climate and pandemic. The pandemic, however, exposed and overwhelmed the fault lines of different women's groups and demonstrated instances of solidarity. Class- and White privileges and increased marginalizations have been renewed, allowing more 'success' for other women on the

base of Whites and Classes, through the social reproductive burden of women migrants and working class women (Staniscuaski et al., 2020). The pandemic was thus associated with renewed privileges and disputes over special forms of child and parental leave at lock-down. Nonetheless, there was reduced access to preventative and reproductive healthcare for women across the board, amplifying gender-blindness in the pandemic response (Niederkröthaler et al., 2020). Discrimination and gender-based violence against ethnic minority women, domestic workers, migrants, sex workers and LGBTQ populations have been exacerbated across the South world. Increased vulnerabilities, a social reproductive crisis and disappearances have posed challenges to the pandemic in global South transnational feminist solidarity (Al-Ali, 2020). However, in order to address these growing challenges, feminist organizations across countries and between countries simultaneously encouraged instances of solidarity, mutual help and caring activities: country-specific initiatives such as Nigeria's 'Federation of Moslem Women's Associations,' Chile's 'Feminist Coordination 8 M.' Iraq's 'She's a revolution, and existing feminist initiatives like the 'Women in development association (AWID)' are part of the global effort (Al-Ali, 2020). Class is not simply a social marker that is co-constitutive of gender, which is why a lot of climate research explains the differences between the effects of climate change on rich and poor groups and the intersections between gender and class in capitalist oppression. In many contexts, intersections of race or ethnicity become important to address; for example, racialized and indigenous communities are marginally positioned relative to colonists or domineering groups; however, each community has its internal and external sex and class dynamics. The issues of capacity, sexuality, age, nationality, status of migrants and others that impact social power relations are also highlighted (Berkhout & Richardson, 2020). Therefore, domestic, community and broader scalar analyses are essential to explain the broader challenges and dynamics of power at the local level. Overlaps and interactions exist and require attention. This attention must also be extended to historical and spatial analyses to include not only different systemic barriers but geopolitical factors. Because legacies of colonialism, imperialism and ongoing coloniality replicate various layers of suppression across spaces and scales, which are important in cross-sectional research, in particular in view of overlapping crises involving uncertainties and several forms of vulnerability, including climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic. Gender inequalities exacerbate differentiated vulnerabilities, exacerbated only by the COVID 19 pandemic, and cause unfair burdens for productive and reproductive labour. This is particularly so for the billions around the world who are marginalized and impoverished from histories of colonialism, capitalism, and development.

Paying attention to intersectionality promotes attention in the context of simultaneous climate breakdown and pandemic differences in vulnerability, resilience, coping, and adaptation strategies and ability. However, it is only the beginning, not the end, to identify points of difference and exclusions. The aim is to expand local authorities to ensure more equity and justice at the ground and structural shift are heard and listened to in the corridors of power. This includes working on the dynamics of the local power to see who is excluded or left out with local leaders, communities, organisations, institutions, and local governments.

The differences between policy advice and living reality are shown as an example here. Water stress and water insecurity compound gender inequalities in which women and girls in many developing countries provide household water daily. These can take place during drought (which is on the rise with the climate), but also during floods and storms (which are also deteriorating with climate change); this insecurity occurs for a number of reasons, such as potable, poor or far-reaching water sources, or social access barriers for different reasons (Sultana & Loftus, 2020). Increasing poverty due to the inability to earn incomes in the context of a pandemic was compounded by the pandemic crisis, as well as the need for water, is another aspect: instructions for frequent hand-washing and sanitary practice at COVID-19 meant that water in the house was more expensive and safer (Loftus & Sultana, 2020; Bhaskar et al., 2020). Where there is no household connection of water or an easy source of reliable water, as in poorer communities around the world, poorer women and girls have spent considerable time and work catching their families water during the pandemic, which has been a challenge because many publicly accessible sources are not sustainable, fail or simply unavailable. It is not, however, all women and girls, as this depends on classes, races or men who take part in the domestic supply of water. The inability to carry out such sex domestic responsibilities has resulted in increased impacts of gender and domestic violence and that households in general are unable to deal successfully with the pandemic and thus strengthen their vulnerabilities and exacerbate public health crises. So we were not all in this together in reality during the pandemic (Loftus & Sultana, 2020). Emergent pandemic research and statistics show how sex care roles and household responsibilities increased with the onset of the pandemic (Ryan & El Ayadi, 2020). There were also impacts of job losses and economic prosperity in whole families and communities in the workplace, with global economic downturns and shutdowns (Dang & Viet Nguyen, 2021). Precarious workers often employed by women and gender minorities have increased the susceptibility to pandemic shocks and increased economic insecurity in households. Furthermore, the inability in developing world countries to repay microfinance loans due to a pandemic economy has affected a huge number of women (Brickell et al., 2020). Gender effects, however, have increased job losses for women and men, as well as increasing distress selling of women's assets (such jewelry), increased incidence of gender-based violence and unpredictable gender burden on health, food and water prejudice as well as compounded impoverishments in the whole of the population (UN Women & UNEP, 2020). The United Nations called it a "shadow pandemic" of the growth of gender-based violence and the growth of women's and girls' sex trafficking (UN Women, 2020). COVID-19 will have greater lasting impacts on women than men in the future, since women generally have fewer political positions of power or control of decision-making on policies, processes and finances that impact their lives (Azcona et al., 2020). By 2021, the authors argue that some 435 million girls and women will live on less than 1.9 US Dollars a day. The COVID-19 is also contributing 47.1 million to poverty. Many of the poorest countries' national debt increased with the COVID-19 economic downturn, resulting in greater threats to gender justice as a consequence of austerity measures (which compounded livelihood precarity and rights exercise) (Fresnillo Sallan, 2020). This has been exacerbated by the climate crises in those countries simultaneously. All of this demonstrates

that it is particularly important to address intersectional impacts of climate change and the ongoing pandemic, as patriarchal rules, inequalities and inequalities often place women and men in different positions in their capacity to address the significant changes in socio-ecological relations and dispossessions and to take account of them.

For example, because major climate-exacerbated storms, hurricanes, heat, wildfires and floods continue to devastate large sections of the world, the pandemic has been worsened by unfair support, relief and rehabilitation landscapes (Dankelman & Naidu, 2020). Erratic waves of heat, wild fires, irregular patterns of precipitation and frequent storming are part of the climate breakdown that is aggravating over time. More rural migrants are driving into urban areas in the developing world as well as more transboundary climate migrants and *réfugies* as the seas are rising, tropical storms, oceans and salinity intrudes into aquifers and surface waters. Given the ripple effects of economic recession and congestion, higher stresses are put on families. All of this complements existing patriarchal violence and injustices, classified and racialized. The overlapping crises also showed varied coping strategies and changes in the perception and enforcement of people's role in their democracies. Further weakening societies across the global South has been observed by state failures or inability to provide relief, sufficient welfare networks or adequate care (Weinreich et al, 2021; Jankó, 2020). Critical and nuanced analyzes of these issues create opportunities for barriers to be overcome and thus promote fair change. As many institutions, governments and decision makers have changed their priorities in the COVID-19 pandemic, the current reality of those faced with the twin climate change and COVID-19 pandemic shows how suffering contours are both reinforced and regenerated. The underlying capitalist ideologies of endless development and environmental exploitation on the finite planet should be called more into question. All these show that an intimate understanding of local dynamics and power structures and the wider political economies and political ecologies of overlapping crises are vital. In the developing world, but also in the industrialized world, unequal gender, class and other inter-sector power relations have been greatly exacerbated by climate change (especially in racialized communities and Indigenous communities). The pandemic has similarly intensified and concomitantly burdens the cross-sectional pain. This enhances our global understanding and ability to act across locations and scales, international, interdisciplinary and intersectional research. While climate change amplifies and exacerbates and creates new forms of interconnected injustices and stress, climate injustice can also exacerbate climate injustice if it is not carefully and critically adjusted and planned to TACH (Vonen et al., 2021). Climate change is not a matter of one concern but a multiplier of stresses. No community is uniform, no class group is homogeneous because it is important to understand contextual intersectional differences. At the same time, only more burden and additional individual and systemically vulnerabilities have been created in the COVID-19 pandemic, which has compounded suffering spatially, temporarily and intergenerationally, and has led to the vulnerability and different treatment of marginalization groups and to the importance of a critical social justice objective. When critical intersectional analyses are carried out, the contours of these burdens become more visible. At present time, intersectional research becomes ethically important, especially by human/social geographers and other critical social

scientists. This can be informed, among other things, by insights from feminist, indigenous, decolonial and critical races. In undertaking cross-sectional work that is meaningful, ethical, and helpful to people on the ground, women's methodological understanding of situations, positionality, critical self-reflection, inter-subjectivity, care ethics, accountability, reciprocity, inclusivity, co-producing knowledge, relationality and critical praxis (Sarada, et al., 2020; Mollett & Faria, 2018). In order to work towards emancipatory changes, people need to engage ethically and critically with different structures, institutions and communities. It also requires interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary work, recognizing that expertise in experiences and knowledge in front-line communities exists beyond the ivory tower (however they are defined in context).

In conclusion, radical approaches to intersectionality go beyond just analyzes and explanations, but exploring opportunities to build solidarity, organizations and communities against systemic inequities and oppression. It provides opportunities to explore resistance strategies and emancipatory changes. It also enables better policy and project planning for climate and pandemic crisis reduction, long-term obligations to address structural, societies and institutional obstacles, and ways to reduce inequalities and foster relations of mutuality, aid, solidarity, care and respect. It provides for better policymaking and project planning. Inter-sectional research can therefore offer a way to tackle institutional and structural challenges that compound the effects of climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic across scales and sites. Feminist policies prioritizing intersectional inclusion and political leverage can create more gender responses for COVID-19 and climate change (Dankelman & Naidu, 2020). These scientists argue that "feminist answers to COVID-19 and the global climate crisis demand fundamental system changes with the need, in the middle of all post-COVID developments, for feminist, just, and green approaches." (Dankelman & Naidu, 2020).

Critical and conceptual re-evaluation of gender intersectionality, and the processual, discursive, and material intersections of the climate and the COVID-19 pandemics are therefore required. There are no easy solutions or fast remediations but it is essential, especially in marginalized areas, for investigating, exposing and understanding different linked injustices, in order to set up and pursue fairer outcomes. The rhetoric of "build back better" or "the great reset" is increasing for the post-pandemic era of climate change that is defined contextually by various countries. Nevertheless, questions remain exactly what that means, who decides for, where and why. Unless specifically done, the post-pandemic recovery may not be sufficiently responsible for gender or gender reactions. Many activist and scholar calling for a move away from the recovery from fossil fuels not only to slow down the climate, but to improve post-pandemic fiscal recovery, including gender-accountable climate financing (Hepburn et al., 2020). Activists have recently given examples of the American Green New Deal (Daniel & Dolan, 2020) and the Asia-Pacific Feminist Fossil Future (Godden et al., 2020). Such efforts would require multiple gender-based collection of data, increased monitoring, accountability, appropriate skills and allocated budgetary resources to intersectional analysis and, where necessary, responsiveness and redress. Such approaches



prevent the generalization and homogenisation of communities, but focus on power relations across processes, whose voices count, how and systemic approaches that foster radical intersectionality recognition in these crises. Addressing gender-just post-pandemic recovery injustices rapidly and including climate justice offers a more just and sustainable pathway. More feminist attention is therefore critically required to address the interactions of these co-produced but uneven processes of deposition and crisis.

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