



Gender Integration in NDCs: A Commonwealth Best Practice Guide

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The Commonwealth



Commonwealth
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Gender Integration in NDCs: A Commonwealth Best Practice Guide



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About this Guide

This Best Practice Guide has been developed by the Commonwealth Secretariat to support Commonwealth member countries on the journey towards gender equality in climate action; with a focus on enhancing the gender responsiveness of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).

The intended users of this Best Practice Guide are the stakeholders of the NDC update process: national climate change focal points, national gender-responsible entities, sectoral leads, Commonwealth National and Regional Climate Finance Advisers of the Commonwealth Climate Finance Access Hub (CCFAH), as well as those who carry out research and assessments on which future NDCs are based.

The guide has been produced from analysis and recommendations for strengthening the gender responsiveness of NDCs in the accompanying report, *Gender Integration for Climate Action: A Review of Commonwealth Member Country Nationally Determined Contributions (second edition)*, and is the result of an inclusive collaborative process from across the Commonwealth.

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Acronyms

ADB	Asian Development Bank
CCFAH	Commonwealth Climate Finance Access Hub
CDKN	Climate and Development Knowledge Network
ETF	Enhanced Transparency Framework
EU	European Union
GBA+	Gender-Based Analysis Plus
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GRB	gender-responsive budgeting
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
NAP	National Action Plan
NDCs	Nationally Determined Contribution
NGO	non-governmental organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
STEM	science, technology, engineering, maths (subjects)
WEDO	Women's Environment and Development Organization
UNCTCN	UN Climate Technology Centre and Network
UNDP	UN Development Programme
UNFCCC	UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNFPA	UN Population Fund
UNIFEM	UN Development Fund for Women (part of UN Women)

Glossary of Terms

Gender: refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men and women, girls and boys, and non-binary persons. Gender tends to be assigned on the basis of biological characteristics, but gender is not biologically constructed. It is a social construct that is contextually bound – it can, and does, change throughout history and across cultural contexts.

Gender equality: refers to equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities for women, men, girls, boys and individuals with non-binary gender identity. Gender equality is the ultimate goal sought with a gender-responsive approach.

Gender equity: refers to fairness or justice in the way people are treated, with consideration of historical and socially determined disadvantages. Gender equity leads to gender equality.

Gender-just transition: refers to the human rights approach to maximising the social and economic opportunities for women in the transition to a low-carbon global economy so as not to exacerbate prevalent gender inequality. A gender-just transition can leverage women's representation and empowerment, and address gender inequality while also strengthening climate action.

Gender-responsive approaches: refer to approaches that examine and actively address gender norms, roles and inequalities. Gender-responsive approaches go beyond sensitivity to gender differences – they actively seek to promote gender equality.

Enhanced Transparency Framework: a single, universal transparency process for all signatories to the Paris Agreement, designed to build trust and confidence that all countries are contributing their share to the global effort. The ETF covers all aspects of the Paris Agreement, including tracking progress of implementation and achievement of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under Article 4.

Intersectionality: refers to the complex, cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination combine, overlap or intersect. An intersectional approach recognises the differences among people of the same gender that must be understood for gender equality.

National gender machinery: refers to the central policy co-ordinating unit inside government. Its main task is to support government-wide mainstreaming of a gender-equality perspective in all policy areas.

Introduction

The 2013 Commonwealth Charter recognises ‘gender equality and women’s empowerment as critical preconditions for effective and sustainable development’. Integrating gender into Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) is an iterative process of increasing ambition to meet Commonwealth, national and international gender equality goals.

This best practice guide supports Commonwealth member countries to integrate gender into NDCs. These are the documents at the apex of national frameworks for climate mitigation and adaptation actions through which gender equality outcomes can be progressed.

The guide encourages users to reflect on the NDC update processes to date, and provides a sample of best practices from across Commonwealth NDCs. Tips and further references are also included, all aimed at increasing gender equality through climate action.

Best practices have been divided into five sections, covering:

- Policy alignment and clarity of intent
- Financing gender expertise and gender budgeting
- Skills for a gender-just transition
- Evidencing a gender-just transition
- Institutional collaboration and feedback mechanisms.

Each section of this best practice guide includes basic questions for consideration by stakeholders, along with a Commonwealth progress check informed by data from the Commonwealth NDC Tracker which will launch in 2023, and a theoretical timeline of actions to help mainstream gender into NDCs processes.

1. Policy Alignment and Clarity of Intent

1.1 Consistent policy alignment across legally binding and voluntary agreements

The integration of gender into NDCs is a function of global goals, international and regional agreements (see Annex 1 for list), and national and sectoral priorities. Country-specific legal and voluntary agreements are important frameworks for gender and social rights improvement through climate actions. Strengthening policy coherence is encouraged under the Glasgow work programme on Action for Climate Empowerment, while consolidating the national legal framework for gender equality and social development will lead to improved gender integration in NDCs.

National gender positions are found in Gender or Equality Acts, policies and strategies, as well as in Human Rights Charters, development frameworks, and the climate change strategies and action plans of national, regional and local implementing entities. Gender equality is increasingly a focus of bi/multilateral funding, including the Green Climate Fund, Adaptation Fund, Global Environment Facility, Climate Investment Fund and the Least Developed Country Fund. The funding windows also adhere to gender policies and often require gender analyses to be included in applications.

Commonwealth progress check: Around one-fifth, or 11 per cent, of Commonwealth country NDCs show evidence of being well-aligned with gender policies, strategies and/or frameworks.

Questions: Are national legal and voluntary agreements in place to support gender equality and social development in the wake of climate change? Are international, regional and domestic gender goals or principles adequately reflected in the NDC and across all sectoral and institutional mandates? Are NDC gender goals adequately integrated across all sub-NDC sectoral and institutional strategies and action plans?

Challenges: It can be challenging to achieve consistency across national legally binding and voluntary agreements when national priorities differ from regional and international agreements.

Tip: Including and cross-referencing NDC gender climate priorities in all national and sector policies, plans and strategies in a consistent manner will multiply the efficacy with which NDC and broader gender goals can be met. Addendum can be added where policy update cycles may delay action from being taken and subnational level improvements made (e.g., within entities seeking climate finance) because as institutions consider and adopt terms, processes become more robust. See Part 1 for advice on Gender Mainstreaming in Practice (UNDP 2013).

Examples

The **European Union (EU)** NDC is prepared in the context of the EU's commitment to gender equality and cross-cutting priorities, as articulated in commitments such as:

- the European Pact on Gender Equality;
- the EU's support for adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; and
- integrating the dimensions of human rights and gender equality by member states into their national plans and strategies under the EU Energy Union Governance Regulation.

Zambia's 2015 Gender Equity and Equality Act promotes the 'full development and advancement of women on an equal basis with men, especially access to and control of resources by women'. The National Climate Change Learning Strategy and the Climate Change Gender Action Plan of 2018 support

'gender transformative climate change processes and guarantee that women and men have access to, participate in and benefit equally from climate change initiatives.'

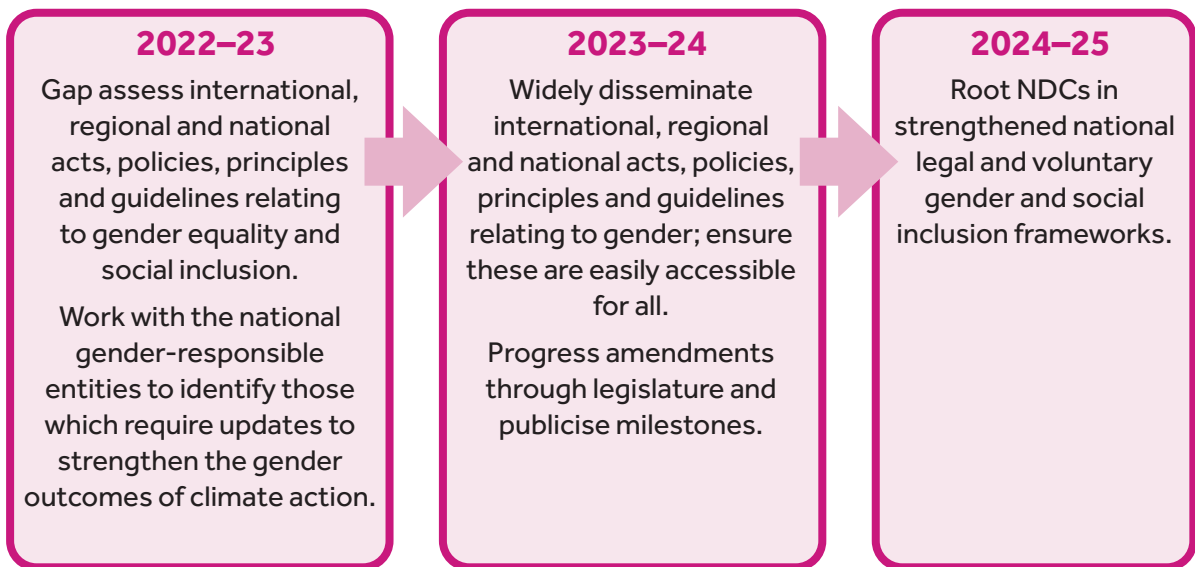
Vanuatu's NDC links to the 2018 National Policy on Climate Change and Disaster-Induced Displacement in which

'planning [...] needs to be underpinned by a strong focus on rights, gender and protection, and integrated into other national planning processes'

and to the National Sustainable Development Plan 2016–2030, which includes policy objectives for

'an inclusive society which upholds human dignity and where the rights of all Ni-Vanuatu including women [...] are supported, protected and promoted in our legislation and institutions including indicators to support the objectives and targets [such as] 4.1.1 Proportion of government departments with gender responsive policies, legislation and programs, and 4.4.3 Proportion of laws reviewed on basis of discriminatory and gender biased principles.'

Best practice action timeline to help drive forwards policy alignment



1.2 Clear statements of intent

A clear statement of intent enables better integration of gender into NDC processes. Commonwealth member countries firmly committed to gender equality have presented gender goals in executive or introductory statements of NDCs, and have included dedicated sections on gender integration and specific actions. Countries with legally binding gender acts and policies are required to and can more easily integrate gender into high-level action documents such as NDCs.

Commonwealth progress check: While the majority, 79 per cent, of Commonwealth countries refer to gender in NDCs, the most ambitious 30 per cent also include a clear statement of intent often within the executive summary or as a key thematic pillar to mainstream gender across all climate actions.

Questions: Does the NDC have a clear gender statement of intent, which reflects the desired societal vision, national goals and builds on previous iterations? Do supporting documents (National Adaptation Plans, National Communications, sector plans, national policies) reflect this intention?

Challenges: It can be difficult for multiple parties with diverse views to agree wording for gender equality commitments in high-level documents, and to understand how to integrate gender considerations into mitigation and adaptation actions.

Tip: The national gender-responsible entities (e.g., the ministry or department for women or gender affairs or a relevant parliamentary committee or caucus) can support the creation of clear ambitious statements of commitment to gender integration within NDCs from which action-oriented policy and planning flows. Youth representatives can join the Commonwealth Youth Gender and Equality Network – a youth-led network that actively promotes and supports the meaningful inclusion of youth voices on gender equality issues in local, national, regional, Commonwealth and international agendas.¹

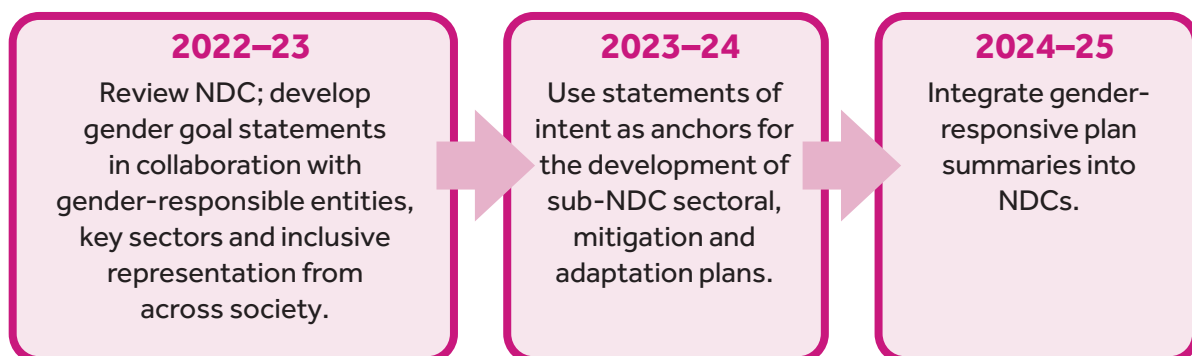
Examples

In the opening message of the updated NDC, **Antigua and Barbuda's** Prime Minister Gaston Browne states, 'The transition to a new energy sector is a long-term process and will be accompanied with adequate policies to ensure sustainable and socially inclusive growth for all citizens, particularly women.'

Nauru's dedicated section on gender states that

'achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls is a key outcome of the National Sustainable Development Strategy, as doing so improves the overall quality of life for all Nauruans.'

Best practice action timeline to develop clear intentions on gender mainstreaming



¹ See <https://www.yourcommonwealth.org/cygen/>

2. Financing Gender Expertise and Gender Budgeting

2.1 Funding gender expertise

Where in post, the national gender, climate change and climate finance focal points, and the gender-responsible entities (government institutions, gender-related civil society organisations, indigenous and local women) must be sufficiently well resourced to help fulfil NDC gender ambition.

Challenges: Sectoral implementing entities may not consider budgeting for gender expertise in climate action as a priority, or be aware of the co-benefits of addressing gender equality through climate action. Civil society organisations are unlikely to have operational budgets to support additional labour or capacity building costs.

Questions: Is the national gender-responsible entity adequately involved in the formulation of NDC budgets? Does the level of seniority and budget for gender focal points (where in post) adequately reflect the ambition of the NDC, acknowledging Decision 1/CP.21 of the Paris Agreement, the Glasgow work programme on Action for Climate Empowerment, and international and Commonwealth gender goals? Through which modalities can the different levels of gender expertise required be financed?

Tip: Formally request that all climate implementing entities budget for gender expertise and invite the gender-responsible entities to be intensively

involved in sessional budget cycle decision-making. Include financial support for gender focal points in NDC financing plans. See the fourth section of Gender Responsive National Communications Toolkit (UNDP 2015: 52).

Examples

Vanuatu: The 2022 updated NDC includes both conditional and unconditional budget allocation for eight mainstreaming commitments under Adaptation Priority Area: Gender and Social Inclusion. For example, Vanuatu commits to enhancing co-ordination between the Gender Protection Cluster and national, provincial, municipal and community disaster and climate change committees for US\$150,000, using 50 per cent unconditional finance.

Fiji: The NDC planning process was guided by the principle of gender responsiveness as articulated in the National Climate Change Policy. The policy makes a specific call to improve gender balance in decision-making and implementation; to promote gender-equitable benefits; and to ensure that gender is a key consideration when programming financing.

Best practice action timeline to raise finance for gender expertise



2.2 Gender responsive budgeting and dedicated finance

Channelling financial resources to generate equitable gender and social benefits through climate action is essential to capitalise on the socioeconomic resourcefulness of the whole of society. Defined gender-responsive budgeting and tagging of climate projects is useful for tracking and identifying outputs and outcomes, as well as 'facilitating improved reporting and transparency over time' under the principles of the Enhanced Transparency Framework, under which countries will need to report finance needed or received, for cross-cutting activities.

National funds being created to support the transition can also help support gender-balanced opportunities for a gender-just transition.

Commonwealth progress check: Although only 11 per cent of NDCs reference the use of gender-responsive budgeting (GRB), around 30 per cent Commonwealth member countries use some form of GRB in their national budgeting processes. Others use gender budgeting at the programme and project levels.

Challenges: Engaging with and building collaboration between ministries of finance, climate change and gender respectively (or responsible departments and focal points) is challenging given competing priorities for constrained national budgets and financing.

Questions: Where conditional and unconditional actions of the NDCs aim to improve gender equality and social inclusion, what value of financial provision has been made to support these goals? Is climate action accounted for in gender budgets?

Tip: The gender-responsible entities can be enlisted to build awareness of the financial gender and social inclusion co-benefits of climate actions; assist with assessing gender components of national, NDC and sectoral climate project budgets; and correspondingly, include climate elements in gender budgets. CCFAH and its national and regional climate finance advisers play an active role in sharing knowledge and building skills to integrate gender and youth in climate finance-related work. See Gender Responsive Climate Budgeting Handbook (UNDP 2021).

Examples

Canada: The 2018 Canadian Gender Budgeting Act requires the minister of finance to publicise the gender and diversity impacts of budget measures, and for the president of the Treasury Board to publicise the gender and diversity impacts of existing Government of Canada expenditure programmes. A Gender Based Assessment Plus (GBA+) was conducted for the Government of Canada's 2021 budget, which found that 48 per cent of the budget's investments would benefit women and men equally, and 34 per cent would disproportionately benefit women.

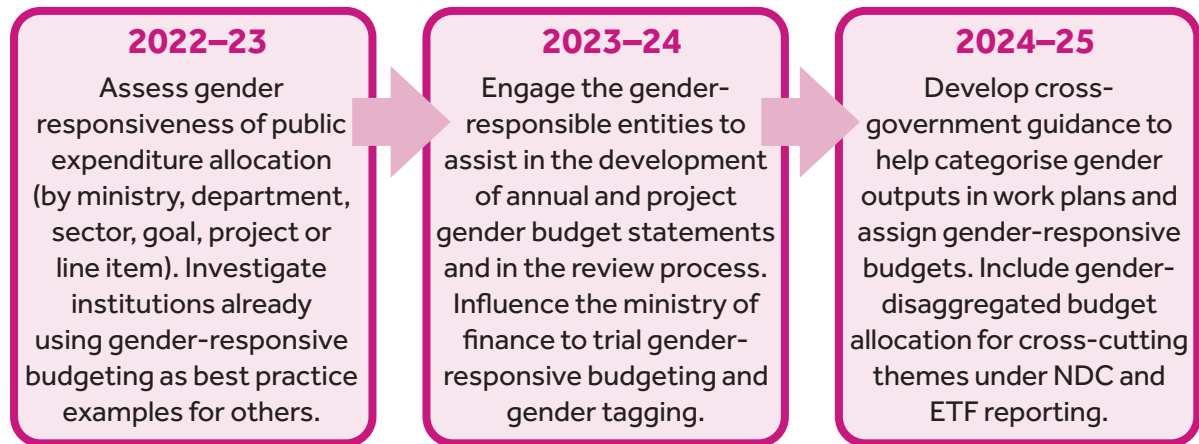
Rwanda: The Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning is responsible for the Integrated Financial Management Information and System, where all agency plans, budgets and reports are submitted for review. These include narrative gender budget statements, which are legally required to be submitted by all agencies and are reviewed in collaboration with the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion.

Dominica has the intention to establish a Venture Capital Fund for Women in Agriculture; reserve 40 per cent of the Climate Change Trust Fund for women, who comprise more than 40 per cent population; and adjust the budget-setting process and criteria to include the definition and weighting of resilience- and SDG-related indicators, including SDG 5 Gender Equality.

Antigua and Barbuda have a Financial Strategy to Support Gender Responsive and Socially Inclusive Implementation of the NDC via concessional financing from the Sustainable Island Resource Fund. Climate projects will be implemented alongside the development portfolio of the Ministry of Finance 'to improve social and gender inclusion into projects and generate measurable results'.

EU: To address social and economic consequences of the transition, a Just Transition Mechanism and Fund will be created in the EU.

Best practice action timeline to help build gender-responsive budgets



3. Skills for a Gender-Just Transition

3.1 Capacity building for gender responsive NDCs

Defining and achieving gender-just benefits from climate mitigation and adaptation actions is critical, whether the benefits are economic, technical and/or social.

Each stakeholder, whether sectoral business leaders, vulnerable communities, men's and women's organisations, or government institutions overseeing high-emission sectors, brings valuable expertise to NDC planning, but a different perspective and level of ability to steer project and/or financial decisions. An inclusive NDC implementation process means building and valuing expertise, such that all stakeholders are empowered to make influential contributions at all levels. Capacity needs to be built:

- In vulnerable, marginalised and under-represented communities, to improve their capability to articulate their position clearly, discuss needs and negotiate NDC decisions persuasively.
- In gender-responsible entities to better understand climate impacts, actions and finance mechanisms, and support the NDC process across delivery entities.
- In all staff at key climate governance and implementing entities to better respond to gender needs in NDC planning, gender-responsive climate pipeline and proposal development, and gender outcome evaluation for iterative NDC advancement.
- In sectoral businesses and government institutions, including those which oversee high-emission sectors, to appreciate and cater for diverse gender needs more considerately and effectively.

Commonwealth progress check: The majority (81 per cent) of Commonwealth member countries stated that the NDC revision process was inclusive, but only 21 per cent demonstrated that they engaged entities responsible for gender equality mainstreaming.

Challenges: Securing the willingness of all stakeholders and especially the most vulnerable, marginalised and under-represented to invest time in building capacity for meaningful participation at formal NDC update meetings alongside daily commitments will be difficult and will require additional time and budget.

Questions: Are gender-responsible entities, especially those which represent indigenous and tribal women, supported and empowered to participate in the NDC revision process? Are the same protagonists always present, which limits new views and ideas? Do sectoral business leaders and government institutions involved in the NDC planning processes have sufficient gender expertise to plan, design, implement and achieve gender components of climate action?

Tip: Arranging multistakeholder capacity building and dialogue-exchange events helps stakeholders appreciate their respective positions. See *Just Transition: An Essential Pathway to Achieving Gender Equality and Social Justice* (UNFCCC/ILO 2022), the Gender Climate Action Training Pack (CDKN 2021), and the second section of the *Gender Responsive National Communications Toolkit* (UNDP 2015).

Examples

Nigeria: A 'whole of society' approach was taken to the NDC revision process, with collaborative and inclusive stakeholder and validation workshops including women's groups and international support to define the gender impacts of different measures. Capacity building for the development of new policies and NDC measures was delivered to women in the private sector.

Namibia's updated NDC has integrated gender in priority conditional and unconditional adaptation measures, including undertaking climate change risk and vulnerability assessment to ensure gender-responsive and informed disaster preparedness and response.

'Consequently, informed capacity building and planning for gender/youth-oriented climate actions and just transition training will be carried out in defined focal points.'

Best practice action timeline to build gender capacity



3.2 Driving attitudinal and behaviour change

Gender-specific vulnerabilities to physical and transitional climate risk are exacerbated by the intersectional circumstances of poverty, disability, ethnicity and status, among others. Addressing habitual social behaviours (e.g., dominance or workplace bias), which perpetuate these risks, as integral components of mitigation and adaptation projects will help to achieve a gender-just transition.

Commonwealth progress check: Just 11 per cent of Commonwealth country NDCs analyse and/or challenge detrimental gender or social norms.

Challenges: Linking social behaviour change to climate mitigation and adaptation actions and outcomes will be challenging if the leadership is not united behind gender equality goals and principles (see Section 1.1).

Questions: Is the NDC perpetuating gender inequality, or helping to challenge negative social constructs to deliver a just transition for all? What proportion (value) of mitigation actions consider intersectional vulnerability, and target and benefit the most marginalised? What are the consequences of the gender imbalance in climate finance flows, given NDC gender aspirations?

Tip: Challenge perceptions and discuss the intersectional vulnerability of gender. Target women as well as men as technology solutions providers and as 'productive use' business owners.

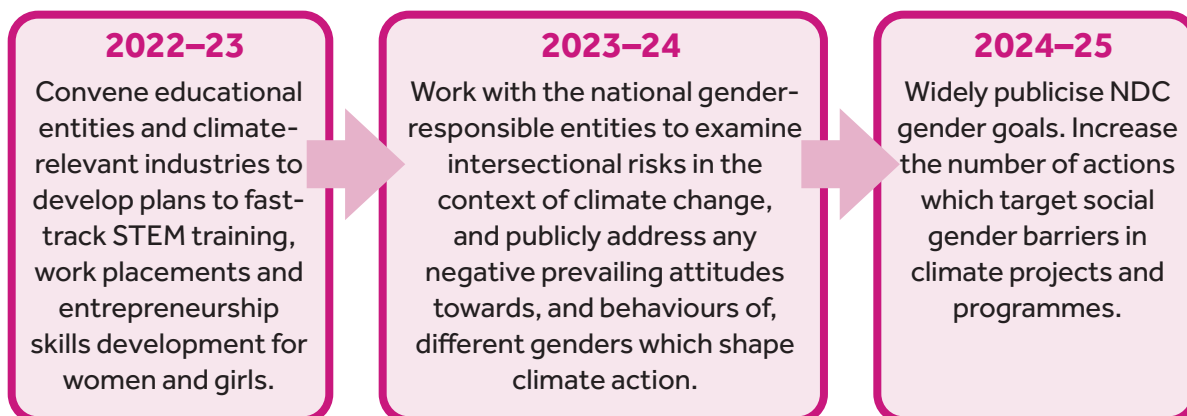
See UN Women's (2022) article on 'Why Women Need to be at the Heart of Climate Action', and use the Glasgow work programme on Action for Climate Empowerment to link STEM (science, technology, engineering, maths) education programmes to climate action to better support women into technical roles (see section 2.2).

Example

Antigua and Barbuda's NDC targets include a 20 per cent increase in the number of women-led businesses implementing renewable energy and adaptation interventions, and that 100 per cent of female-headed households (around 20,000 homes) will face no barriers to accessing back-up renewable energy generation and storage systems. The country will

'ensure that NDC implementation: a) recognises and acknowledges gender norms and inequalities and responds to them by creating actions, policies and initiatives to address the different needs, constraints and opportunities of women and men; and b) ensures that women's and men's differential needs are addressed; that participation of women and men is equitable; and that distribution of benefits, resources, status and rights are equitably addressed.'

Best practice action timeline to promote women into technical roles



3.3 Women's representation as decision-makers in key climate-related sectors

The balance of gender in decision-making should represent the gender balance in society. Too often decisions about the home, in the community, business or government institutions are made by men, which can lead to perspective and investment bias. For inclusive NDC development, a conducive environment needs to be created in which women leaders emerge or are promoted into decision-making positions, especially in high-emission sectors.

Challenges: Cultivating an environment in which women can take on decision-making roles, and in which the authority of women leaders is recognised and acknowledged, may not be agreeable where power and position are predominant aspirations.

Questions: Are all key stakeholders, and especially business leaders and government institutions that oversee high-emission sectors, able to field women decision-makers to support the NDC update process? Do inter-ministerial climate committees have appropriate gender balance, to monitor and advance NDC gender priorities?

Tip: Engage or promote gender and climate focal points or gender advisers into leadership positions, with appropriate authority and budget to support their decisions. See UNFCCC Decision 20/CP.26,² which reminds parties of the UNFCCC's encouragement to appoint and provide support for a national gender and climate change focal point for climate negotiations, implementation and monitoring. Aim for gender balance in the NDC update process and encourage key stakeholders to field women decision-makers to lead negotiations where possible.

Example

Fiji notes that the NDC planning process was guided by the principle of gender responsiveness, as articulated in the National Climate Change Policy. The policy makes a specific call to improve gender balance in decision-making and implementation; to promote gender-equitable benefits; and to ensure that gender is a key consideration when programming financing.

Best practice action timeline to improve women's representation



2 https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/cp2021_12_add2_adv.pdf (see page 35)

4. Evidencing a Gender-Just Transition

4.1 Assessment of gender needs and outcomes

Structural gender inequalities are embedded in society and exacerbated by intersectional disadvantages and, unless addressed, climate action will perpetuate and reinforce the negative impact of these. Using gender analysis to improve understanding of gender circumstances where there are gaps or priorities to be addressed, helps to define and refine NDC goals and project design. This is equally important in both adaptation and mitigation projects, to prevent occupational segregation and improve the balance of existing and future labour opportunities. Gender assessments should inform all proposed NDC interventions and help prioritise and budget for the actions that will most effectively contribute to meeting national gender goals.

Commonwealth progress check: Analysis showed that 9 per cent of Commonwealth country NDCs were informed by gender analysis, and a further 9 per cent are planning to use gender analysis to inform the 2025 submission.

Challenges: Defining exact assessment needs, sourcing expertise and securing results to inform the NDC update is time consuming and may be seen as non-essential by some stakeholders.

Question: Are gender analyses planned, budgeted and being carried out to inform the next NDC update?

Tip: Build competence in climate institutions to carry out gender assessments using on/offline tools. Involving public and private sector leaders in the assessment and verification process helps build advocacy. See page 5 of *Gender Analysis and NDCs: Short Guidance for Government Stakeholders* (UNDP 2019b); Gender-based Analysis Plus resources (Government of Canada, no date); and sections 2 and 3 of *Gender Analysis Guide: A Technical Tool to Inform Gender-Responsive Environmental Programming* (IUCN 2021).

Examples

Ghana used the findings of a comprehensive gender analysis to inform the latest NDC revision. Each contributing adaptation and mitigation action was also evaluated according to a five-point low, medium and high gender-responsiveness scale.

Canada's overarching climate plan, A Healthy Environment and a Healthy Economy, was informed by Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+), an inclusive analytical process to maximise the benefits for those most impacted by climate change. GBA+ addresses systemic inequalities by considering the personal experiential value of the effect of policies, programmes and initiatives across the federal government on diverse groups of women, men, and non-binary people. This helps to identify gaps and adds to the quality and integrity of proposed NDC action. In accordance with the 2019 Impact Assessment Act, consideration is given to the intersection of sex and gender with other identity factors such as age, disability, education, ethnicity, sexual orientation, economic status, geography, language, race and religion, and mitigation measures are developed in collaboration with those who are vulnerable and/or disadvantaged (for example, indigenous people and women).

Vanuatu is committed to promoting the use of gender analysis, sex-disaggregated data and gender indicators in adhering to best-practice monitoring, evaluation and learning processes in climate change programming. This is endorsed by the National Advisory Board on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction, which is allocating US\$800,000 for that purpose of which 20 per cent is unconditional finance.

Best practice action timeline to increase the evidence base that informs NDCs



4.2 Gender differentiated data, targets and indicators

Setting project-specific targets and indicators which link to national and international gender targets which are clearly defined in the NDC, helps to guide, track and evidence progress, especially if gender is considered as a cross-cutting theme to be delivered under the responsibility of more than one entity.

The collection and statistical analysis of gender-differentiated quantitative and qualitative data, is vital to inform gender-responsive development of mitigation and adaptation measures, and to evidence gender-related progress against NDC goals. Improving the exchange of gender-differentiated data and information in standardised formats between key institutions, including but not limited to national statistics offices, universities and NGOs, helps to build the evidence base for the NDC update process. Developing the statistical analysis capabilities of institutions is advised to strengthen understanding of gender impact, and the national gender-responsible entities can assist with data and information sourcing, validation, gender indicator setting and progress evaluation.

Commonwealth progress check: A total of 15 per cent of Commonwealth country NDCs regularly collect and process sex-disaggregated data and 11 per cent of Commonwealth countries include gender-specific mitigation and/or adaptation targets with indicators in their NDCs.

Challenges: Gender information outcomes will be limited by the extent of open data sharing and the rigour with which targets and indicators are set.

Questions: Does adequate collaboration and co-ordination exist between data generators and data users, including national statistics offices? Do all relevant mitigation and adaptation actions include gender targets and indicators? Is the NDC target-setting, monitoring and reporting process informed by data of sufficient quality and granularity with which to prioritise actions and measure progress?

Tip: All key stakeholders can contribute to the production and standardisation of data to evidence progress against gender targets. See *Gender Responsive Indicators: Gender and NDC Planning for Implementation* (UNDP 2019a) and *Quality Assurance Checklist for Revising Nationally Determined Contributions* (UNDP 2020).

Examples

Antigua and Barbuda has designed targets to

'support an inclusive, gender-responsive approach to the just energy transition, with special focus on women fully participating in the new economy; provide support to men working within the energy and transportation sectors; and take a gender-responsive approach for girls and boys of all income levels to meet the new challenges and opportunities that [the global low-carbon transformation] process can provide.'

A selection of gender responsive targets:

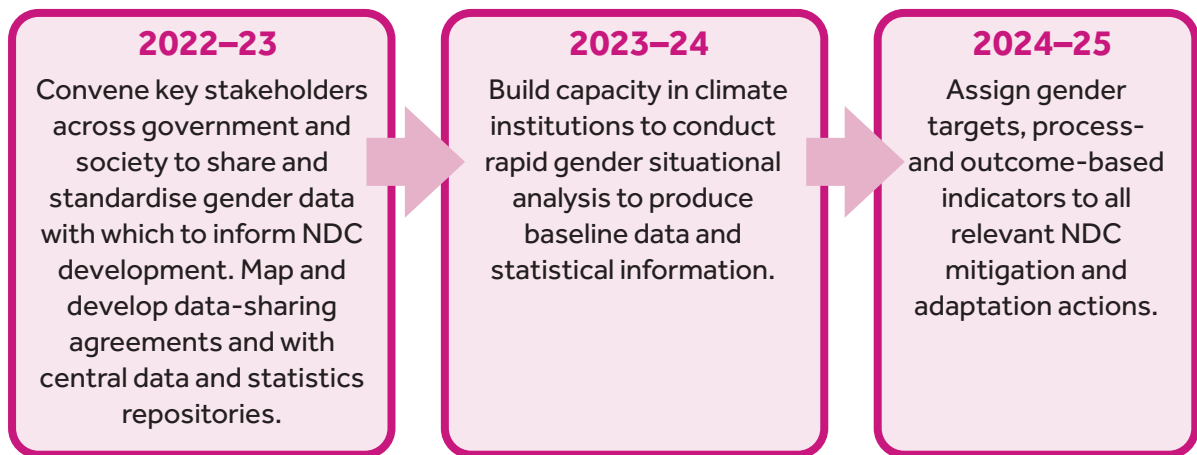
- 100 per cent of female-headed households have all barriers removed to access back-up renewable energy generation and storage systems (i.e., 20,000 homes).
- 100 per cent of community businesses and organisations that support women in their post-extreme weather event recovery are identified and provided with support for their efforts, to facilitate women's ability to resume work/livelihoods within seven (7) days after such an event.
- Development of a gender-responsive approach to the just transition of men in the energy and construction sectors (baseline: currently approximately 95 per cent men in these sectors).
- Farmers and their families are [...] provided with disaster support, taking into account the differential needs of male and female farmers.

Vanuatu has developed NDC targets and both process- and outcome-based indicators, which are directly linked to National Sustainable Development Plan indicators and tracked via an integrated monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV) tool. The tool supports government agencies, development partners and NGOs towards evidence-based decisions and data insights reporting. A selection of agriculture (Ag), water (Wat) and social (Soc) adaptation indicators:

- Ag 1.10: Turnover generated by agriculture SMEs [small and medium-sized enterprises] and private sector operators, by gender and province in normal and (climate, disaster and environmentally) stressed times.

- Ag 2.9: Proportion of men and women engaged in subsistence agriculture in each of the six provinces in normal and (climate, disaster and environmentally) stressed times.
- Wat 1.1: Water-climate vulnerable rural communities for all six provinces mapped, using GIS as well as human-rights based, gender-sensitive and socially inclusive approaches and methods of assessment.
- Wat 1.8: Proportion of men and women with adequate access to water in each of the six provinces in normal and (climate, disaster and environmentally) stressed times.
- Soc 4.1.2 Number of decisions in which women participate.
- Soc 4.1.3 Indicators of women's empowerment.

Best practice action timeline to track and achieve gender outcomes through NDC actions



5. Institutional Collaboration and Feedback Mechanisms

5.1 Co-ordinating gender work across government and beyond

As part of the NDC update process, clear roles and responsibilities for gender integration, lines of accountability and required collaborations and co-ordination procedures should be determined and documented across and between national and subnational entities. This must include gender-responsible entities as well as non-governmental organisations that represent gender interests, and those implementing and monitoring NDC gender-mainstreaming objectives.

Commonwealth progress check: Twenty-one per cent of Commonwealth member countries meaningfully included gender-responsible entities and non-governmental gender representatives in the NDC update process, but none identified them as key partners for NDC delivery of gender goals.

Challenges: Gender-responsible government entities and non-governmental gender representatives may not have sufficient capacity to advise and support across all climate-implementing entities, nor to help monitor the progress of gender mainstreaming.

Questions: Are the communication and co-ordination mechanisms between national and subnational gender-responsible entities and

the private sector sufficiently well developed? Do forums exist in which knowledge-transfer can occur?

Tip: Strengthen the requirement and budget for cross-government collaboration with gender-responsible national and sub-national entities, and with the private sector. See Chapter 2 of *Toolkit for Mainstreaming and Implementing Gender Equality* (OECD 2015).

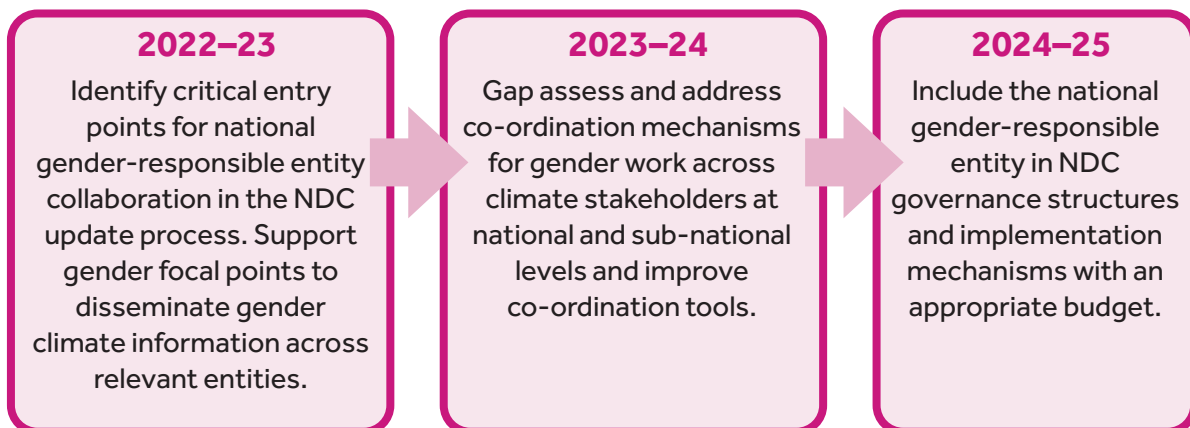
Example

Kingdom of Eswatini:

'The participatory and inclusive revision process meaningfully engaged and consulted a wide group of government as well as non-government stakeholders, involving ministries and government departments, academia, youth, gender specialists, traditional leaders, civil society organisations and private entities. This process also had active participation from various social groups, including women and youth.'

Climate change was included in the National Gender Policy 2021 during the revision of the NDC.

Best practice action timeline to improve co-ordination on gender elements of NDCs



5.2 Transparency review mechanisms

As part of regulatory processes with which public entities are held to account, progress on NDC gender outcomes should be independently reviewed to gauge whether interventions are achieving the desired gender outcomes. In addition to assigning responsibilities, and judicial and institutional accountability mechanisms being strengthened, citizen forums with adequate representation by indigenous, vulnerable and marginalised communities can be convened as permanent observatory and feedback mechanisms, both to inform the NDC update process and appraise gender impact over time.

Challenges: Governmental and non-state entities may reject independent review mechanism unless clear benefits can be illustrated and the reporting requirements under the Enhanced Transparency Framework explained.

Question: What are the ways in which gender impact is being accounted for in and between each of the key sectors and institutions (for example, are service-level agreements in place between

implementing entities, progress dashboards used, or independent NDC gender progress reviews conducted)?

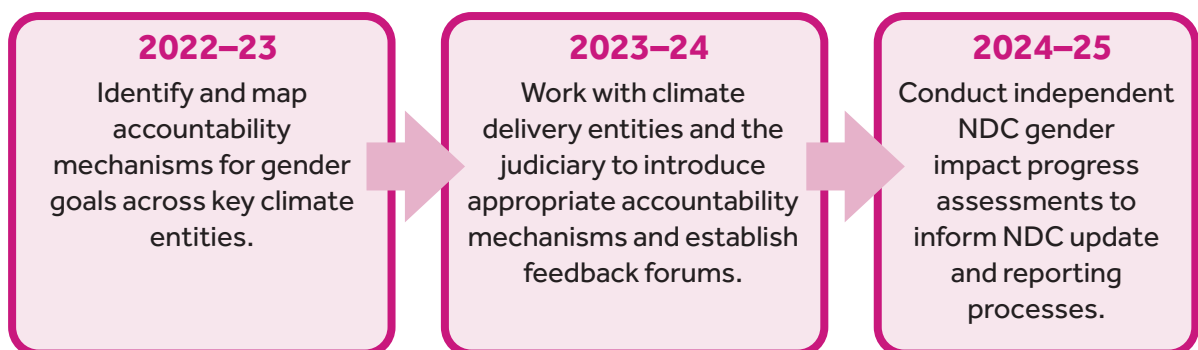
Tip: Map accountability and recourse mechanisms across implementing entities.

Example

The Gambia:

'The mitigation measures were validated through consultation with stakeholders, including the National Women Farmers Association and the TRY Oyster Women's Association, among others, to ensure that consultations were gender responsive. The National Climate Change Stakeholder Forum, comprising representatives from farmers' groups, women's associations, professional associations, faith groups, children's and youth groups, workers and trade unions, media outlets, business and industry, and charitable organisations, will maintain exchanges with the Secretariat, particularly on matters relating to policy and scientific research agenda setting and social auditing.'

Best practice action timeline to review and improve gender outcomes through NDC actions



Annex 1: Signatory, International and Regional Agreements

For all signatories to the Paris Climate Agreement

- Decision 1/CP.21 acknowledges that climate change is a common concern of humankind, and that Parties should, when taking action to address climate change, respect, promote and consider their respective obligations to human rights, gender equality and the empowerment of women.
- The Glasgow work programme on Action for Climate Empowerment³ agreed in 2022 encouraged Parties to:
 - make greater efforts in integrating gender into nationally determined contributions and national climate change policies, plans, strategies and action;
 - take stock of and map progress in advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in line with the priority areas of the Gender Action Plan;
 - appoint and provide support for national gender and climate focal points in undertaking their activities; and
 - be more explicit about the gender-responsiveness of climate finance with a view to strengthening the capacity of women and furthering work under the Gender Action Plan.

International agreements on gender

- UN Declaration on Human Rights
- Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women
- Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action
- United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

- Sendai Framework

For all Commonwealth member countries

- **Commonwealth Charter** core value and principle #12: 'We recognise that gender equality and women's empowerment are essential components of human development and basic human rights. The advancement of women's rights and the education of girls are critical preconditions for effective and sustainable development'.⁴
- Gender and Climate Change is one of the four Commonwealth Priorities for Gender Equality, endorsed by the Commonwealth women's affairs ministers.
- The Commonwealth Living Lands Charter made a Commitment to Safeguard Global Land Resources 'in the light of different national circumstances taking into account mutual respect, inclusiveness, transparency, accountability, legitimacy and gender responsiveness'.
- The Board of Governors, Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in June 2022, endorsed the **Draft Declaration on Gender Equality 2021–2030** by committing to 'drive forwards inclusive and gender-responsive solutions within national action plans, across mitigation, adaptation and resilience across the Commonwealth'.

Regional pacts also highlight the importance of taking a gender and human rights approach:

- Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States' **Gender Policy**.⁵
- CARICOM Regional Gender Equality Strategy (in draft).

³ FCCC/CP/2021/12/Add.2

⁴ <https://thecommonwealth.org/charter>

⁵ <https://www.oecs.org/en/our-work/knowledge/library/social-development/oecs-commission-gender-policy>

- Pacific Islands Forum, **Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration 2012 (under review)**.⁶
- Association of South Asian Nations recognises the fundamental link between gender equality and human rights-based approaches, and thus a focus on gender and inclusion, and ensuring that the voices and needs of the poorest is a central tenet of the **Gender Mainstreaming Strategic Framework 2021–2025**.⁷
- East African Community **Gender Policy**.⁸
- Southern African Development Community **Gender Policy**.⁹
- Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS): the overall vision of the Policy for Gender Mainstreaming in Energy Access is a world where men and women shall enjoy equal access to modern energy services that is easily available, affordable and contributes to high levels of standards of living and economic development.
- **ECOWAS Disaster Risk Reduction Gender Strategy and Action Plan 2020-2030**¹⁰;
- **ECOWAS Humanitarian Policy**.¹¹

6 <https://www.forumsec.org/2012/08/30/plged/>

7 <https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/ASEAN-Gender-Mainstreaming-Strategic-Framework-endorsed-by-AMMW.pdf>

8 [https://www.jamii.go.tz/uploads/publications/sw1542101555-EAC GENDER POLICY.pdf](https://www.jamii.go.tz/uploads/publications/sw1542101555-EAC%20GENDER%20POLICY.pdf)

9 <https://www.sadc.int/fr/file/3728/download?token=kqCSpXid>

10 https://www.gfdr.org/sites/default/files/publication/ECOWAS%20GSAP_EN_Final.pdf

11 <https://ecowas.int/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/ECOWAS-HUMANITARIAN-POLICY-FINAL-FINAL-09.03.12-PDF.pdf>

Annex 2: References and Resources

The following list is arranged according to the approximate order in which a developer of gender climate policy or gender-responsive climate projects would progress work. All resources cited in the text of this guide are included in this or the following list, but not all resources are cited.

Theme	Author	Title	Summary of resource/section of resource	Link
Gender mainstreaming	UN Women (2022)	<i>Why Women Need to be at the Heart of Climate Action</i>	Short blog on the UN Climate Change High-Level Champions Race to Zero website	https://climatechampions.unfccc.int/explainer-why-women-need-to-be-at-the-heart-of-climate-action
Gender mainstreaming for government stakeholders	UNFCCC (2022)	<i>Implementation of the activities contained in the gender action plan, areas for improvement and further work to be undertaken.</i> (UNFCCC/SBI/2022/8)	Succinct list of examples of capacity-building initiatives undertaken by government departments. See page 6 (a) Activity A.1, 2 and 3. Reviews capacity-building efforts for governments and other stakeholders in mainstreaming gender in formulating, monitoring, implementing and reviewing, as appropriate, national climate change policies, plans, strategies and action, including NDCs, NAPs and national communications.	https://unfccc.int/documents/499279
NDC gender integration	NDC Partnership (2021)	<i>Developing Gender-responsive NDC Action Plans: A Practical Guide for Policy Makers and Practitioners</i>	Useful step-by-step practical guide for countries to follow for mainstreaming gender into NDC Action Plans.	https://ndcpartnership.org/news/developing-gender-responsive-ndc-action-plans-practical-guide-policy-makers-and-practitioners
Gender mainstreaming in policies	UNDP (2013)	<i>Gender Mainstreaming in Practice</i>	Easy read sections with questions, answers and steps on mainstreaming gender in policy-making and the use of policy briefs.	http://www.undp-aciac.org/publications/other/undp/gender/RBEC_GM_manual.pdf
Integration of gender into work	UNFCCC/ILO (2022)	<i>Just Transition: An Essential Pathway to Achieving Gender Equality and Social Justice</i>	A report and recommendations to help countries on a pathway to gender equality and inclusiveness where work is disrupted by climate change impacts.	https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/SubmissionsStaging/Documents/202204141910---ILO%20submission%20-%20Just%20transition%20-%20An%20essential%20pathway%20to%20achieving%20gender%20equality%20and%20social%20justice.pdf
Gender analysis	UNDP (2019b)	<i>Gender Analysis and NDCs: Short Guidance for Government Stakeholders</i>	Explanation of how gender analysis for NDCs should provide recommendations on gender-responsive policy alignment, institutional co-ordination, capacity building, sex-disaggregated data collection, and finance into the priority NDC sectors.	https://www.ndcs.undp.org/content/ndc-support-programme/en/home/impact-and-learning/library/gender-analysis-and-ndcs--short-guidance-for-government-stakehol.html

Theme	Author	Title	Summary of resource/section of resource	Link
Gender analysis	IUCN (2021)	<i>Gender Analysis Guide: A technical tool to inform gender-responsive environmental programming for IUCN, its members, partners and peers</i>	A guide for project developers, managers and implementation staff covering gender analysis, gender-based violence (GBV) considerations and including templates for common actions, such as recruiting a gender expert, developing a Gender Action Plan etc.	https://Genderandenvironment.org/lucn-Gender-Analysis-Guide/
Gender-responsive indicators	UNDP (2019a)	<i>Gender Responsive Indicators: Gender and NDC Planning for Implementation</i>	Clear, succinct guide with sectoral examples to develop different kinds of gender-responsive indicators for NDC project implementation in different sectors.	https://www.ndcs.undp.org/content/ndc-support-programme/en/home/impact-and-learning/library/gender-responsive-indicators-gender-and-ndc-planning-for-implementation.html
Gender-responsive budgeting	UNDP (2021)	<i>Gender Responsive Climate Budgeting in Indonesia</i>	Practical PowerPoint example of the rationale for, and key steps of, gender-responsive climate budgeting, based on Indonesia's adaptation budget and covering climate, thematic and gender tagging, with further references.	https://www.undp.org/indonesia/publications/gender-responsive-climate-budgeting-handbook
Climate finance	WEDO/CDKN (2021)	<i>Guide to Strengthening Gender Integration in Climate Finance Projects</i>	Examples for strengthening gender integration for project teams preparing, designing, implementing and monitoring climate finance projects in developing countries under the four primary multilateral climate funds – the Adaptation Fund, Climate Investment Funds, the Green Climate Fund and the Global Environment Fund – and other project approaches.	https://wedo.org/webinar-guide-to-strengthening-gender-integration-in-climate-finance-projects/
Gender reporting	UNDP (2015)	<i>Gender Responsive National Communications Toolkit</i>	Toolkit for building capacity to understand and analyse gender issues, engage stakeholders and integrate gender equality into the development and reporting of National Communications.	https://www.undp.org/publications/gender-responsive-national-communications
Guidance for applicants	Green Climate Fund (GCF)	<i>Toolkit for Mainstreaming Gender in GCF Projects</i>	A manual for nationally designated authorities, focal points and direct access entities on the methodological approaches that can be employed in designing projects, including gender analysis, gender assessment and action plans, and gender-responsive results or logical frameworks.	https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/guidelines-gcf-toolkit-mainstreaming-gender_0.pdf
Guidance for applicants	Adaptation Fund (2022)	<i>Updated Gender Guidance Document for Implementing Entities on Compliance with the Adaptation Fund Gender Policy</i>	Useful guidance for applicants to the Adaptation Fund (AF) covering: project identification and readiness support; gender-responsive stakeholder consultation; addressing gender inequality; gender assessments; results frameworks; and target and indicator setting, sex disaggregated data, measuring, reporting and verification (MRV), and evaluations.	https://www.adaptation-fund.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Doc.AFB38_39_Inf.1_updated-gender-guidance-doc_1.pdf

Theme	Author	Title	Summary of resource/section of resource	Link
Gender and the environment	IUCN	Gender and Resource Centre	Library of documents, blogs, infographics, webinars etc., related to gender and the environment under five headings: Addressing Gender-Based Violence; Advancing Women's Participation and Leadership; Climate Change; Environment and Gender Data; and Fisheries. Includes a useful filter on left side to select resource type, including: Unlocking Women's Economic Empowerment; Integrating Gender in the Project Cycle; Filling Knowledge and Data Gaps; and Building Gender Knowledge and Capacities.	https://genderandenvironment.org/libraries

The following additional resources are ordered alphabetically by author.

Theme	Author	Title	Summary of resource/section of resource	Link
Gender mainstreaming for government stakeholders	ADB (2015)	<i>Training Manual to Support Country-Driven Gender and Climate Change Policies, Strategies, and Program Development</i>	From theory to practice, with exercises to build capacity in key policy and project staff; a step-by-step knowledge-building resource for policy-makers and practitioners with training exercises under four topics: Gender and climate change; Climate policy landscape; Making climate finance work for inclusive mitigation; and Mainstreaming gender – from policies to projects.	https://www.adb.org/publications/training-manual-country-driven-gender-and-climate-change
Gender capacity building	CDKN (2021)	Gender Climate Action Training Pack	A six-step training guide for facilitators and trainees with slides, handouts and case studies covering: 1. International and national frameworks; 2. Why a gender approach is needed; 3. Assessing people's climate risks and resilience; 4. Assessing options for and planning gender-responsive, socially-inclusive climate solutions; 5. Committing equity responsive budget; and 6. Implementing projects and programmes inclusively.	https://www.preventionweb.net/publication/resource-gender-climate-action-training-pack-resource-practitioners
Gender-responsive budgeting	Council of Europe (2009)	<i>Gender Budgeting: Practical Implementation Handbook</i>	Detailed handbook on gender budgeting, designed for use by those responsible for the implementation of gender budgeting and prioritisation of equality issues by matching policy commitments with resource allocation.	https://rm.coe.int/1680599885
Gender analysis	Government of Canada	Gender-Based Analysis Plus	Information, training on gender-based analysis, plus to assess how diverse groups of women, men and gender diverse people experience policies, programmes and initiatives, while also exploring systemic and intersectional inequalities.	https://women-gender-equality.canada.ca/en/gender-based-analysis-plus/resources.html
Institutional co-ordination	OECD (2015)	<i>OECD Toolkit for Mainstreaming and Implementing Gender Equality</i>	Guide with questions and tips to improve gender mainstreaming in institutional governance.	https://www.oecd.org/gov/toolkit-for-mainstreaming-and-implementing-gender-equality.pdf

Theme	Author	Title	Summary of resource/section of resource	Link
Gender-responsive budgeting	Overseas Development Institute (2018)	<i>Gender- Responsive Public Expenditure Management: A Public Finance Management Introductory Guide</i>	Guide on how the impact of public expenditure differs by gender in low-capacity environments – for finance and planning ministries, and those who support Them.	https://cdn.odi.org/media/documents/12188.pdf
Various	She Changes Climate (2022)	Strengthening Solutions Through Inclusive Leadership: A Case for Women-Just Climate Action	Brief focused on women's involvement and leadership to address climate change, among other resources available at: https://www.shechangesclimate.org/	https://www.shechangesclimate.org/s/FINAL-SHE-Changes-Climate-issue-brief-data-on-inclusive-leadership.pdf
Gender mainstreaming into policies and projects for government stakeholders	UNCTCN (2017)	Gender Mainstreaming Tool for Response Plan Development	Guide to mainstreaming gender in project development.	https://www.ctc-n.org/technologies/ctcn-gender-mainstreaming-tool-response-plan-development
Various	UNCTCN	Multi-resource Database	Some 634 technical assistance and publication sources relating to climate change and gender. Extensive database of resources which can be filtered by region, country, sector, mitigation or adaptation, or approach.	https://www.ctc-n.org/technology-sectors/gender
Gender mainstreaming	UNDP (2020)	Quality Assurance Checklist for Revising Nationally Determined Contributions	Checklist to support governments, civil society, and other stakeholders in the NDC revision across 3 dimensions: country ownership and inclusiveness; robustness and ambition; and feasibility	https://www.ndcs.undp.org/content/ndc-support-programme/en/home/impact-and-learning/library/climate-promise-quality-assurance-checklist.html
Gender-responsive budgeting	UNFPA and UNIFEM	Gender Responsive Budgeting in Practice: A Training Manual	Three-day modular training for governmental and non-governmental organisations to support gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) at country level.	https://www.unfpa.org/publications/gender-responsive-budgeting-practice-training-manual

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