



# Gender Integration for Climate Action: A Review of Commonwealth Member Country Nationally Determined Contributions



The Commonwealth



Commonwealth  
**CLIMATE FINANCE  
ACCESS HUB**

# Gender Integration for Climate Action:

A Review of Commonwealth Member Country  
Nationally Determined Contributions

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Author: Catherine Allinson, Future Earth Ltd. Director/Strategic Gender, Climate & Finance Advisor

Peer reviewers:

Margaux Granat, Founder/Director, and Emma Jones-Phillipson, Consultant, EnGen Collaborative  
Leisa Perch, CEO/Founder SAEDI Consulting (Barbados) Inc./Gender and Environment Consultant

Internal reviewers:

#### **Climate Section**

Unnikrishnan Nair – Head of Climate Change

Uzoamaka Nwamarah – Adviser, Climate Change and Project Manager

Sasha Jattansingh – Commonwealth National Climate Finance Adviser for Antigua and Barbuda

Ruth Phillips Itty – Commonwealth National Climate Finance Adviser for Saint Lucia

#### **Gender Section**

Jennifer Namgyal – Adviser, Gender Mainstreaming

Monika Pindel – Programme Officer, Gender and Development

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# Acronyms

AFOLU	agriculture, forestry and other land use
BTR	Biennial Transparency Report
BUR	Biennial Update Report
CCFAH	Commonwealth Climate Finance Access Hub
COP	Conference of the Parties
EnGenDER	Enabling Gender-Responsive Disaster Recovery, Climate & Environmental Resilience in the Caribbean
GBA+	Gender-Based Analysis Plus
GHG	greenhouse gas
GGGI	Global Green Growth Institute
GRB	gender-responsive budget(ing)
GRCB	gender-responsive climate budget
INDC	Intended Nationally Determined Contribution
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
LDC	least developed country
LWPG	Lima Work Programme on Gender
LX	lifetime experiential value
MRV	measurement, reporting and verification
NAP	National Adaptation Plan
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
PX	personal experiential value
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SIDS	small island developing state
STEM	science, technology, engineering and maths
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNDP	UN Development Programme
WEDO	Women's Environment and Development Organization





# Glossary

**Adaptation:** refers to adjustments in ecological, social or economic systems in response to actual or expected climatic stimuli and their effects or impacts. It refers to changes in processes, practices and structures to moderate potential damages or to benefit from opportunities associated with climate change.

**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-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.

**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.

**Mitigation:** in the context of climate change, is a human intervention to reduce the sources or enhance the sinks of greenhouse gases. Examples include using fossil fuels more efficiently for industrial processes or electricity generation, switching to solar energy or wind power, improving the insulation of buildings, and expanding forests and other 'sinks' to remove greater amounts of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.<sup>1</sup>

**National women's 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.

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1 UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). *What do adaptation to climate change and climate resilience mean?* Available at: <https://unfccc.int/topics/adaptation-and-resilience/the-big-picture/what-do-adaptation-to-climate-change-and-climate-resilience-mean>



# Executive Summary

The Earth's climate is a system influenced by many complex interlinked feedback loops. Gender equality and the empowerment of women is a global sustainable development goal, also subject to many influences depending on context and national circumstances. While there is no doubt that climate and gender equality are intersectional issues, both are stand-alone goals under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and jostle for position with other social and economic development priorities.

This paper presents a macro-level overview of the extent of gender integration in Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs), and new or revised Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) by Commonwealth member countries submitted to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) by 26 July 2021, which total 20 of the 54 member countries. It does not include a detailed review of national communications, biennial reports, or associated domestic policies, plans and frameworks which support the NDCs. It is an entry point for considering the degree of gender integration in the national climate goals of Commonwealth member countries.

Emphasis is placed on the 20 revised submissions, which in many cases provide useful examples for countries yet to submit revised NDCs. The results are intended to provide a baseline for future Commonwealth Secretariat interventions towards policy development, finance, technology and capacity building for implementation of gender-inclusive climate action in Commonwealth member countries.

NDCs were assessed using a quantitative and qualitative framework covering gender policy alignment; institutional co-ordination; capacity building and technology; monitoring mechanisms and financial resources dedicated to gender-responsive mitigation and adaptation activities; and including an eight-point scale to illustrate the journey from no gender integration through gender awareness, sensitivity and responsiveness, accounting for interim states and leaving room for

future steps towards the ultimate goal of systemic gender equality.

Critical gaps common to most NDCs include:

- Addressing systemic behaviour change as a driver of climate-related gender inequality and as one of its solutions;
- Citation of women as agents of change i.e., leaders of mitigation projects and occupying governance roles as controllers (of resources) at every level, especially in energy, transport and industry;
- Genuine contributory participation of the gender machinery, supporting agencies and community representatives in the NDC process, with capacity to deliberate and influence climate mitigation and adaptation plans;
- Evidence of the practical resource capacity of climate institutions and gender machineries to conduct gender-based assessments, and bring forward the resulting data and evidence to support the NDC implementation process;
- Defined financing for gender equitable outcomes across mitigation and adaptation;
- Evidence of the capacity of the gender machinery to influence and integrate gender considerations into climate budgets and reporting systems;
- Mention of sub-national implementation plans detailing how gender integration will be coordinated, quality (outcome) assured, and how supporting agencies and civil society will be engaged.

In line with the finding of the UNFCCC NDC Synthesis Report,<sup>2</sup> there has been a significant 34% increase<sup>3</sup> in the integration of gender in second round new or updated NDCs across most criteria used in this assessment (Table 1).

In developing countries, integration is mostly evident in the planning process, both as a result of the NDC document format and the NDC update support programmes funded through international development partnerships.

2 UNFCCC (2021), *Nationally Determined Contributions under the Paris Agreement: Synthesis report by the secretariat*.

3 A rise from 46% to 80% from original to new/updated NDCs.

**Table 1. Summary results of original (I)NDCs and new and updated NDC quantitative assessment**

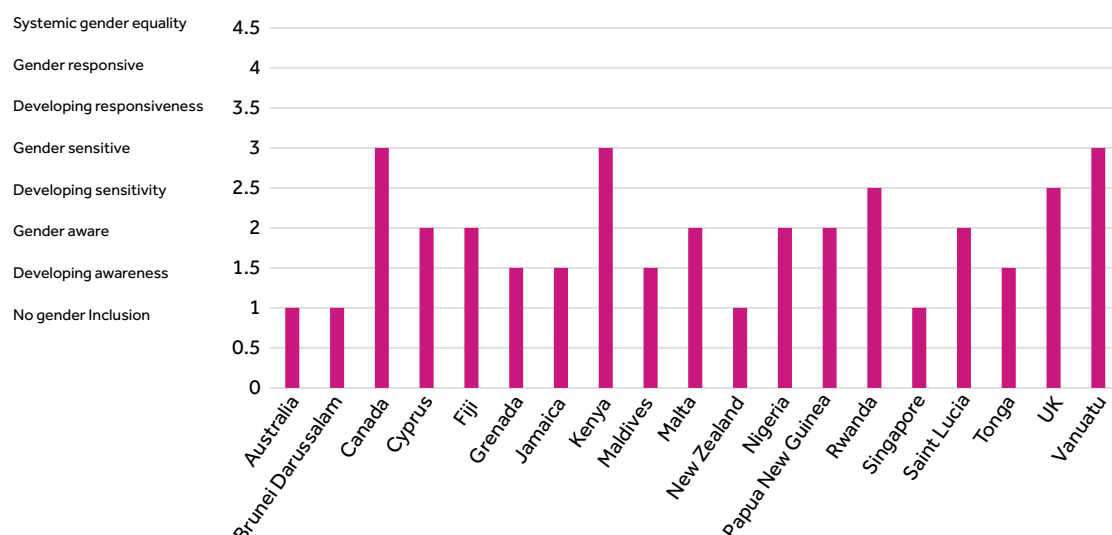
Question	Original NDCs Yes	New & updated NDCs Yes	Change
Evidence of gender reference being aligned with gender policy, strategies, frameworks or wider climate or development policies?	17%	50%	33%
Does the NDC analyse or challenge gender or social norms?	4%	15%	11%
Is there evidence of a participatory planning process for the NDC?	48%	90%	42%
Is there specific evidence of women’s groups and national women’s and gender institutions being engaged in the process of updating the NDC?	0%	20%	20%
Is there reference to capacity building, which includes training in the science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) subjects/sectors?	15%	25%	10%
Is there a mechanism for measuring and monitoring the implementation of the NDC?	28%	40%	12%
Is there reference to the collection of sex-disaggregated data and gender analysis in the NDC?	2%	10%	8%
Is there reference to any / gender-responsive budgeting in the NDC?	17%	15%	-2%

In developed countries, three of the seven Commonwealth member countries have not reported on gender in their new/updated NDCs, having done so via their Biennial Update Reports (BURs), making comparative analysis challenging. The remaining four developed countries have included information on gender integration.

Based on the assessment of the 20 NDCs, countries making the most progress on integrating gender considerations have developed gender-related programme indicators (10%), refer to technical

training (25%), include gender-responsive budgeting (15%), have monitoring systems to track mitigation and adaptation outcomes (40%), and use sex-disaggregated data (10%). Overall, 4% new or updated NDCs analyse or challenge gender and social norms. The qualitative assessment also undertaken correlates highly with these quantitative assessment results, showing five Commonwealth member country NDCs are gender sensitive or include elements of gender sensitivity. These are **Canada, Kenya, Vanuatu, Rwanda** and the **UK** (Figure 1).

**Figure 1. Summary results of new and updated NDC qualitative assessment**



## Contextual review

**Canada**, the **EU**<sup>4</sup> and the **UK** position gender in the context of equality, human rights or social inclusion through respective national or trans-national gender and human rights conventions, such as the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Member States to the European Pact on Gender Equality, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples or the UK Equality Act. **Canada** references gender throughout, and in particular under the goal of a Just Transition<sup>5</sup> and considerations of equity and fairness. **Grenada**, **Nigeria** and **Papua New Guinea** position gender in their introductory statements linking to national gender policies or plans and, along with the **EU**, **Kenya**, **Nigeria**, **Rwanda** and **Vanuatu**, include references throughout their NDC. These countries show intent and the majority follow through with ways to achieve gender-related ambitions, which have increased alongside greenhouse (GHG) emissions reduction ambitions.

Representing a strong trend, 13 (or 65%) Commonwealth member countries included gender as a cross-cutting or mainstreaming priority in new or updated NDCs submitted by 26 July.<sup>6</sup> Details included by countries show progress towards gender representation in policies, plans and strategies, and in participatory planning NDC development processes, supporting UNFCCC synthesis report findings<sup>7</sup> in which 'Parties are increasingly recognizing gender integration as a means to enhance the ambition and effectiveness of their climate action'.

The number of women cited as beneficiaries (mainly under adaptation objectives) has risen slightly, as have the now two references to women as agents of change and three direct references to women as stakeholders in decision-making. These findings are

positive, though tempered as a gender-equitable balance and the extent of the effective participation or influence of different genders on the decision-making process cannot be inferred, and 80% of new and updated NDCs gave no specific reference<sup>8</sup> to women's machineries being engaged.

Although there has been a significant increase in the number of countries including reference to gender sensitivity, awareness or responsiveness in NDCs, the contextualisation for and specificity of *how* gender inequality will be addressed through climate mitigation and adaptation actions is articulated to varying degrees. Context and specificity fall to minimal in associated climate policies, and are insignificant in associated energy, transport, and other key sector strategies and implementation plans that predate the recent submissions. These will need revising to reflect the increased NDC gender ambitions and keep pace with the current five-year NDC revision cycle.<sup>9</sup>

Embracing the complexity of climate change does require a 'whole system' approach. However, the risk of positioning gender as a cross-cutting theme within climate change, itself a cross-cutting theme, is that it becomes only superficially integrated into governance systems intently focused on the processes to support technological and market-based solutions to climate change. These do not tackle the underlying societal and cultural norms which lead to gender-differentiated climate risks and direct/indirect impacts, and with increasing inclusivity, the specificity required to address gender inequality becomes less visible.<sup>10</sup>

In the attempt to mainstream gender, fewer NDCs now cite gender in relation to adaptation activities and fewer still in relation to mitigation activities. This perpetuates gender inequality because, despite the increase in rate of adaptation funding, 48% of multilateral climate finance, 65% of bilateral climate finance and 75% of multilateral development bank own resources allocated as climate finance are for

4 Two Commonwealth member countries are EU member states, which collectively submit one NDC.

5 UNFCCC 2020. Just Transition the creation of decent work and quality jobs.

6 Note: the basis for determining whether gender is considered as a cross-cutting theme is not consistent across analyses by different organisations and may lead to differences in the results. For this report, if the NDC mentioned the words 'cross-cutting', 'mainstreaming' or included gender as a priority across development activities, it was considered as cross-cutting, as opposed to focused on mitigation or adaptation.

7 UNFCCC (2021), *Nationally Determined Contributions under the Paris Agreement: Synthesis report by the secretariat*, footnote 9 under point 21.

8 It is possible that women's organisations were involved but that their engagement was not recorded or included in the NDC.

9 The process of iterative policy and plan updates is challenging for developing countries and small island developing states (SIDS) with limited capacity and resources and, too often, plans do not come to fruition without cross-government mandates.

10 Allwood, G (2020), *Mainstreaming Gender and Climate Change to Achieve a Just Transition to a Climate-Neutral Europe*, available at: <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.13082>

mitigation activities,<sup>11</sup> with adaptation investment negligible via private investment which is a concern. Financial beneficiaries are those engaged in design and delivery of mitigation activities, predominantly within the often unshakable power-seats of energy, transport, construction and industry, as well as suppliers of technology solutions from developed countries. These are sectors in which women's participation tends to be low across the Commonwealth. In plain language, the proportion of financial value gained by all genders through technology investment needs to be scrutinised and evidenced along the entire value chain when committing to gender equality as a cross-cutting theme.

## Alignment of gender and climate policies and plans

The marked increase of Commonwealth member countries referencing gender policies, strategies or frameworks in their updated and new NDCs, is a positive sign of increased commitment to addressing gender inequality as part of national action on climate change, and that governance bodies overseeing climate and gender are beginning to find complementarity in their respective cross-cutting agendas. References have doubled from 17% in the original (I)NDCs to 50% in new and updated NDCs. While policy development and government consultation on implementation plans provide good entry points to improve the gender sensitivity of NDC documents and awareness in stakeholders, the current levels of policy integration fall short of what is needed for gender-responsive outcomes and there are gaps in the coherence of and direct connections between policies at the national level, mainly in the Caribbean and Pacific regions of the Commonwealth. Though some NDCs mention subnational diffusion, especially where federated or devolved, the connections to sectoral, local/discrete policies, strategies and frameworks are tenuous.

## Institutional co-ordination for gender and climate change

Across developing countries and other small island developing states (SIDS), good progress has been

made between original INDCs and updated NDCs on establishing and strengthening institutional responsibilities for climate action, and undertaking participatory, whole-of-nation or inclusive planning processes.<sup>12</sup> Even though collaboration between institutions responsible for climate and gender during the NDC participatory planning process is evident, tangible evidence of institutional collaboration on planned implementation of climate action with the gender machinery is hard to find in all but four countries. It is also apparent that under competing priorities and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, developing countries and SIDS are severely limited by their human resource capacity across institutions to effectively manage, co-ordinate and report the gender impact of measures aspired to.<sup>13</sup> The same is true for gender machinery support agencies and community groups, which may suffer survey fatigue, on top of household, income generation and caring responsibilities.

In many NDCs, it is not clear how the descriptive arrangements to ensure gender sensitivity or responsiveness of NDC mitigation and adaptation activities, are substantiated. Institutional lines of responsibility, and reporting oversight for gender integration are included but the techniques to ensure effective collaboration are not expanded upon – the *how* is missing, underlining the need for more capacity and effective collaboration and management tools. Mention of quality control and assurance measures, both within and beyond agencies and extending into the private and third sectors, are entirely absent. Assessing short-term impact in gender outcomes in advance of the next Lima Work Programme on Gender (LWPG) review and the broader 2023 stocktake will be challenging.

## Capacity building in technology

Almost all (I)NDCs and new and updated NDCs from developing countries and SIDS refer to large capacity gaps, which will need to be overcome if they are to implement their NDCs; however, 75% still make no specific mention of capacity building for science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) subject/sector training.

11 UNFCCC (2020), *Summary by the Standing Committee on Finance on the Fourth Biennial Assessment and Overview of Climate Finance Flows*.

12 An inclusive or participatory NDC planning process was undertaken in 90% of the NDCs reviewed.

13 Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI) (2020), *Preliminary Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Assessment Report*, Papua New Guinea Climate-Resilient Green Growth (CRGG) Project.

No NDC acknowledges a capacity gap with regards to national expertise on gender, which is noteworthy because to fulfil the ambitions of gender-responsive NDCs, all countries will need to invest considerably more in the abilities of their gender machineries and gender focal points (where present). These must effectively and credibly co-deliver alongside climate-related institutions, and increasingly with the private sector, not only on gender action but at the intersection of climate and gender action where women are still seen as users (of technology, wisdom, resources) and men as suppliers. This tradition is at odds with social change.

Although most NDCs focus on access to and transfer of solutions, and some NDCs include innovation capital allocation, the equalising role gender-specific human capital investment as another form of capacity building can play, is an oversight in the local design, development and leadership of the wide range of proposed mitigation and adaptation measures and innovations.

## Measurement, reporting and verification systems

Commonwealth member countries with a measurement, reporting and verification (MRV) system in place have increased from 12% in original (I)NDCs to 40% in new/updated NDCs. Almost all, 18/20 (90%) do not reference gender indicators or the collection of sex-disaggregated data and/or gender analysis.

The pioneering methods of countries like **Canada**, with its personal experiential values analysis, and actions by **Rwanda, Kenya, Vanuatu** and **Zambia** to integrate their MRV systems across several government institutions with mandated roles for collaboration, show significant progress is being made on developing and improving MRV systems. However, across the board, gender monitoring, data and analysis remain a serious issue.<sup>14</sup> Given the expense and lag time in establishing end-to-end systems, reporting with any accuracy on the impact of NDC implementation on gender-related outcomes within the next five-year cycle is already severely constrained.

14 Data was raised as a hurdle for most developing countries in their INDCs; the resulting Decision 18/CMA.1 requested the Global Environment Facility continue to support the operation of the Capacity-building Initiative for Transparency as a priority reporting-related need, but significant challenges remain.

Information access poses both a trust barrier to be broken down between the climate institutions and gender machineries and an opportunity for supporting organisations to engage and build capacity at the local level, where people of all genders can be more involved in the retention of indigenous and production of local knowledge and data on climate impacts for their own resilience. Quality assurance and control will be critical, as will the apportioning of appropriate roles to subnational entities and gender-based organisations to support this need.

## Financial resources dedicated to gender-responsive activities

With the exception of **Canada's** incorporation of quality-of-life measurements into its budget, and gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) by **Fiji, Kenya**, and **Rwanda**, none of the other Commonwealth member country NDCs reviewed makes an explicit link between finance and gender-related outcomes. The ramifications of omitting gender considerations across the value chain of mitigation and adaptation budgets permeate right through the NDC process, the business of climate change and the desired gender-equality outcomes. References to a gender-sensitive distribution of finances, funds or investments, which in some cases do target particular sectors and specific actions, would be a useful addition to NDCs, as the UNFCCC Standing Committee on Finance finds 'gender-responsive public finance is likely to be more effective and efficient'.<sup>15</sup>

Although there have been increasing efforts by multinational climate funds to mainstream gender into fund governance and operations,<sup>16</sup> only 33% of climate finance projects take gender equality into account.<sup>17</sup> There is also limited use of GRB in spite of support from UN Women, the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and the National Adaptation

15 UNFCCC (2020). *Summary by the Standing Committee on Finance on the Fourth Biennial Assessment and Overview of Climate Finance Flows*.

16 This is despite UNFCCC guidance relating to adaptation projects in 2016, where "a gender perspective needs to be taken into account when developing resource mobilization strategies, applying climate finance instruments, and ensuring equal participation in the deployment of financial resources, particularly at the local level".

17 FCCC/CP/2021/6. The UNFCCC workshop on long-term climate finance notes that mitigation finance continues to represent over two-thirds of total public climate finance (mostly loans, not grants).



Plan (NAP)-Global Network, indicative of the wide disparity between intent and effect. In other words, once funds are disbursed at the national level, there is a lack of quality control over how it is spent and resulting gender outcomes.<sup>18</sup>

## Recommendations

### Prioritising gender in context

1. Increase capacity building for institutional staff and key sector leaders on the progression from gender neutrality to gender responsiveness
2. Conduct gender-based analysis plus gender-related policy outcome assessments as standard
3. Increase communications, and raise awareness of gender-differentiated physical and transitional climate risk in civil society, government institutions and the private sector
4. Define and promote women as agents of change and technology solutions providers, rather than only as users

### Policy integration of gender

5. Review legal requirements for addressing climate change and gender equality
6. Increase women's representation as decision-makers in key climate-related sectors

### Institutional co-ordination across gender and climate change

7. Conduct capacity needs assessment across gender machineries and supporting agencies
8. Require climate institutions and gender machineries to collaborate intensively
9. Use updated tools and management systems to improve co-ordination, including at the subnational and local levels

### Capacity building in technology

10. Fast-track curriculum adjustments to accelerate science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) training for women and girls
11. Improve technical gender representation by addressing barriers to STEM uptake

### Measurement, reporting and verification systems, sex-disaggregated data and information

12. Increase knowledge sharing and technical assistance for gender impact measurement, reporting and verification systems implementation
13. Develop a quantitative and qualitative gender data and statistics action plan linked to mitigation and adaptation measurement, reporting and verification data plans
14. Collate, use and share appropriate gender-related indicators, metrics, data and information

### Financial resources dedicated to gender-responsive activities

15. Appoint responsible focal ministries for gender-responsive climate budgeting and fund administration, with strong accountability clauses to include lead gender machineries
16. Build gender-responsive climate budgeting capacity through climate finance focal point advisers within the Ministry of Finance and disseminate across public and private institutions
17. Instigate gender-responsive climate budgeting and outcome reporting under the Enhanced Transparency Framework
18. Budget for the inclusion of gender machineries and supporting agency services in climate action and visa versa

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18 Heinrich Boell Stiftung (2021), *10 Things to Know About Climate Finance in 2021*, available at: <https://us.boell.org/en/2021/04/01/10-things-know-about-climate-finance-2021-0>; or the back-and-forth question of whether to fund at the national or grassroots level to insure impact.

# Chapter 1. Introduction: Global and Commonwealth Context

## 1.1 Aims and intent

Holocene climate change exerts pressures or feedback loops across the biosphere, including human society, magnifying weaknesses and inequalities in the process of finding new balance. Gender inequality is exacerbated in times of climate-related shocks and stresses and stands in the way of the global principles of equity, rights and inclusion, and achieving the Paris Agreement, the Sustainable Development Goals and the Beijing Declaration.

The Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) are public documents of intent, which present to the world the increasing ambition of countries to reduce greenhouse gases (GHGs) and try to limit global warming to the agreed target of 1.5 degrees centigrade. NDCs sit within the broader architecture of nations' action on climate change, often comprising a policy and implementation structure flowing from the 2015 global Sustainable Development Goals, into national sustainable development plans, supported by national climate change policy, and respective mitigation and adaptation action plans. As one component of information presented to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC or 'the Convention'), NDCs are revised every 5 years.

This paper presents a macro-level overview of the extent of gender integration in new or revised Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) by Commonwealth member countries submitted to the UNFCCC by 26 July 2021, which total 20 of the 54 member countries, and compares these with the original Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDC). It does not include a detailed review of National Communications (NC), Biennial Update Reports (BUR), or associated domestic policies, plan and frameworks that support the NDC. It is an entry point for considering the degree of gender integration between gender and climate goals of Commonwealth member countries and, in many cases, provides useful examples for countries yet to submit revised NDCs. The results are intended to provide a baseline for future

Commonwealth Secretariat interventions towards policy development, means of implementation and access to finance for gender-inclusive climate action-planning in Commonwealth member countries.

The macro-level results aim to:

- Identify prevailing gaps, entry points and opportunities for the integration of gender in NDCs;
- Generate information on gender-responsive NDC planning, by sharing best practice examples of gender integration (see illustrated boxes);<sup>19</sup>
- Build the body of analytical evidence, which parties can use to improve their NDC gender commitments;<sup>20</sup> and
- Help inform the Commonwealth Secretariat's climate-related budgeting and programming process for gender-responsive initiative planning and operations, particularly through the activities of the Commonwealth Climate Finance Access Hub (CCFAH) and the Call for Action on Living Lands.

The review takes place alongside the broader agenda to examine progress on gender equality in UNFCCC processes, within the institution and in-country, through the tracking of the disbursement of climate finance, the implementation of national adaptation and mitigation initiatives, and the impact of these on people of all genders. The intended audience is the Commonwealth women's ministerium, Commonwealth country climate change focal

19 Supports LWPG Priority area C: *Coherence C.2 Facilitate the exchange of views and best practices of the Chairs of constituted bodies on how to strengthen the integration of the gender perspective into their work, taking into account the synthesis, into constituted body processes.*

20 Supports LWPG Priority area A: *Capacity-building, knowledge management, and communication: A.4 Strengthen the evidence base and understanding of the differentiated impacts of climate change on men and women and the role of women as agents of change and on opportunities for women.*

points, Commonwealth national and regional climate finance advisers, the Commonwealth Secretariat and Commonwealth member countries.<sup>21</sup>

The quantitative and qualitative assessment results and discussion are based predominantly on the information provided within the NDCs, which is not an indication of the level or depth of societal gender integration in case the objective of gender equality is missed in the attention given to the process of analysis.

This initial background Chapter 1, on UNFCCC gender goals and Commonwealth member country commitments to gender equality, is followed by an outline of the framework developed to support the analysis and its limitations in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 highlights progress and areas of concern from across the Commonwealth, and Chapter 4 delves into the thematic results of NDC gender positioning, policy alignment, institutional co-ordination, capacity building for technology development, monitoring and financial resources. Each chapter is summarised with key takeaways, best practice examples from the 20 new and updated submissions, and makes recommendations for improved gender integration. Chapter 5 concludes the analysis.

## 1.2 NDC purpose and opportunity for improving gender outcomes

### 1.2.1 UNFCCC goals

The NDCs are a normative framework for actions to decarbonise economies, which parties to the Paris Agreement develop and submit according to UNFCCC guidelines. Countries around the world are at different stages in the development and implementation of greenhouse gas reduction obligations, and it is anticipated that as time goes by, the NDCs will become increasingly robust to limit global warming to 1.5°C above the 1990 baseline.

According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC),<sup>22</sup> to be consistent with global emission pathways with no or limited overshoot of this goal, global net anthropogenic CO<sub>2</sub> emissions need to decline by ~45% by 2030 from the 2010 baseline. As of the end of July 2021 report cut-off date, 110 countries, of which 20 are Commonwealth

member countries, had submitted new or revised NDCs, with 68 stating their intent to enhance their ambition or actions.<sup>23</sup> Taking all new or updated NDCs revisions into account, projected GHG emissions reductions from proposed actions amounted to just -12% by 2030.<sup>24</sup> The IPCC confirmed the NDCs were insufficiently ambitious, amounting to 2.7°C warming by the end of the twenty-first century under intermediate Shared Socioeconomic Pathway 2 (4.5) scenarios relative to 1850–1900.<sup>25</sup>

### 1.2.2 UNFCCC commitment to gender

Like all physical and social systems, climate change and gender equality are complex, in flux and understood as interconnected, requiring an integrated approach that builds climate resilience, while also promoting human rights and justice, particularly for marginalised people of all gender identities. Two decades ago in 2001, the Conference of the Parties 7 (COP7)<sup>26</sup> mandated that national adaptation programmes be guided by gender equality and take a gender-sensitive approach. In 2014, the Lima Work Programme on Gender (LWPG)<sup>27</sup> was adopted to 'advance gender balance and integrate gender considerations into the work of Parties and the secretariat in implementing the Convention to achieve gender responsive climate policy and action'.

In 2016, the Convention decided on a three-year extension of the LWPG,<sup>28</sup> and the first Gender Action Plan (GAP) was established a year later.<sup>29</sup> The plan acknowledged 'the continuing need for gender mainstreaming through all relevant targets and goals under the Convention', specifically noting that 'gender-responsive implementation and means of implementation of climate policy and action can enable Parties to raise ambition, as well as enhance gender equality, and just transition of the workforce and the creation of decent work and quality jobs in accordance with nationally defined development priorities'.

23 World Resource Institute, Climate Watch, *Stepping Up NDCs*, available at: <https://www.wri.org/ndcs>

24 UNFCCC (2021), *Nationally Determined Contributions under the Paris Agreement: Synthesis report by the secretariat*.

25 IPCC (2021), *Full Report Climate Change 2021: The Physical Science Basis*, AR6 Working Group 1. The figure in brackets relates to the approximate level of radiative forcing (in W m<sup>-2</sup>) and associated warming of between 2 and 3°C.

26 Decision 36/CP.7.

27 Decision 18/CP.20.

28 Decision 21/CP.22.

29 Decision 3/CP.23.

21 The Commonwealth (2019), *12WAMM Outcomes Document*.

22 *Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C* 2018.

In the compilation of the recommendations for an enhanced LWPG,<sup>30</sup> parties were invited 'to mainstream a gender perspective in the enhancement of climate technology development and transfer'. At COP25 in 2019, parties adopted the five-year enhanced LWPG and its gender action plan<sup>31</sup> 'which promotes gender equality and women's empowerment in the UNFCCC process'. The language chosen was to 'encourage Parties to advance its implementation'.

### 1.2.3 Commonwealth Secretariat commitment to gender

The Heads of Government of the Commonwealth of Nations adopted the Langkawi Declaration on the Environment in 1989, committing support to the IPCC and work on climate change. All Commonwealth member countries are signatories to the Paris Agreement.

The 2013 Commonwealth Charter recognises 'gender equality and women's empowerment as critical preconditions for effective and sustainable development' and, in 2015, the Commonwealth Secretariat was mandated by the Board of Governors Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) Communique, as well as in the cross-cutting outcomes of the 2017/18–2020/21 Strategic Plan of the Commonwealth Secretariat, to mainstream gender equality across all its policy and work programmes. Specifically, the remit is 'to work with member countries to promote and strengthen evidence-based, gender-sensitive policy and legal frameworks that prevent discrimination, empower women and girls to participate, represent and lead in political, social, and economic spheres'. Gender and Climate Change is one of the four Commonwealth Priorities for Gender Equality, endorsed by the Commonwealth women's affairs ministers in 2016<sup>32</sup> and 2019,<sup>33</sup> under which the 'equal participation

and leadership roles for women in developing and implementing international and national action plans for climate change and disasters', is to be encouraged and promoted.

### 1.2.4 Opportunity for gender transformation in Commonwealth member countries through action on climate change NDC commitments

Tackling the systemic global issue of gender inequality is rooted in international agreements preceding the Paris Agreement: the 1979 United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the 2005 Hyogo Framework for Action and the 2015 Sustainable Development Goals, among others. At COP16 in 2010, the Convention decided on a 'shared vision' for climate action, recognising that 'gender equality and the effective participation of women are important for climate action on all aspects of climate change'.<sup>34</sup> Importantly, a decade on, stronger climate policies and lower GHG emissions have been found where females have greater representation in national parliaments.<sup>35</sup>

The post-COVID global recovery adds both complexity and opportunity for aligning the climate, sustainable development and green recovery agendas. Social attitudes and behaviour change are a hugely important part of this, along with the global shift to a low-carbon society and economy. Yet technological solutions remain the primary focus to reduce GHGs<sup>36</sup> in NDCs, with too little attention given to the value of women's skills and influence, as well as indigenous knowledge for a more natural approach to emissions sequestration and/or balancing of the way humans thrive.<sup>37</sup> Steps towards gender equality can be realised through a Just Transition but retraining or giving access to resources is not the same as realising value from resources. Addressing the difference between core societal values and pervading gender-based behaviour, is as critical as integrating gender

30 See: UNFCCC, *Table document containing the status of implementation of the Lima work programme and suggested recommendations for improvement*, available at: <https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/LWPG%20summary%20recommnedations.pdf>

31 Decision 3/CP.25.

32 The Commonwealth (2016), *Commonwealth Priorities for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment 2017–2020 and Beyond*, available at: [https://thecommonwealth.org/sites/default/files/inline/Paper-Commonwealth-Priorities-for-Gender\\_Equality-2017-2020.pdf](https://thecommonwealth.org/sites/default/files/inline/Paper-Commonwealth-Priorities-for-Gender_Equality-2017-2020.pdf)

33 The Commonwealth (2019), *12th Commonwealth Women's Affairs Ministers Meeting (12WAMM) Outcomes Document*, available at: [https://thecommonwealth.org/sites/default/files/inline/12WAMM\\_Outcome\\_Statement.pdf](https://thecommonwealth.org/sites/default/files/inline/12WAMM_Outcome_Statement.pdf)

34 Decision 1/CP.16.

35 Mavisakalyan, A, and Y Tarverdi (2019), *Gender and climate change: Do female parliamentarians make difference?*, *European Journal of Political Economy* Vol 56, 151–164.

36 Article 10, Paris Agreement.

37 World Resources Institute (2021), *4 Ways Indigenous and Community Lands Can Reduce Emissions*, available at: <https://www.wri.org/insights/4-ways-indigenous-and-community-lands-can-reduce-emissions>

considerations at all stages of the project cycle and at all levels of the workforce. The NDCs provide the opportunity to publicly present both the intent to address gender inequality as integral to domestic climate action, and to evidence how that intent will be converted into measurable outcomes. Countries

must ask what are the core values that influence the economic and social daily personal (DX) and lifetime experiential value (LX)<sup>38</sup> gained by people of different genders at every rung of the ladder in the end-to-end mitigation and adaptation delivery and supply chain?

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38 Lifetime eXperiential value (LX) is the sum of Daily eXperiential value (DX)', the individual personal economic and social experiences of life, and how these contribute to well-being (author).

# Chapter 2. Assessment Framework

## 2.1 Assessment framework

Acknowledging the Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO) Gender Climate Tracker,<sup>39</sup> and combining Levels 1 and 2 in the World Health Organization (WHO) gender criteria for assessing programmes and policies,<sup>40</sup> an indicator framework was developed to assess the extent of gender integration into new and updated NDCs and show progression from original (I)NDCs. The framework was refined during a series of collaborative workshops with the author and the Commonwealth Secretariat Climate and Gender Technical Teams, focusing on current impact-oriented themes in line with the UN Development Programme (UNDP) gender analysis.<sup>41</sup>

Each theme comprised several weighted quantitative questions condensed under five assessment themes (see Table 2; Annex 2) and a series of qualitative questions based on a revised and updated version of NDC Partnership gender definitions to which interim definitions and values

on an arbitrary 0.5 scale were added, to account for countries that are progressing between the defined states on their journey towards gender equality (Table 3). The aim was to establish a quantitative and qualitative baseline fit for upward expansion, such that beyond 4.0 gender responsiveness, further 0.5 steps can be added before reaching systemic gender equality (currently 4.5 but could become 5.5 or more) as climate action gender-related data and information become available and are increasingly refined.

Achieving gender responsiveness in the assessment of an NDC document is not a measure of gender equality; however, it can help evidence progression towards that end across the activities being undertaken to mitigate and adapt to climate change. A comprehensive review of all NDC-related policies, frameworks and plans would support this high-level snapshot of a country's current state.

## 2.2 Results limitations

To recognise and report on the integration of gender into the whole NDC process, from a macro-level lens held over an NDC document, presents several challenges. The primary intent of the NDC is documenting the progression of each country's highest possible ambition to reduce carbon emissions, and in doing so 'respect, promote and consider their respective obligations with regards to gender equality, empowerment of women', among other principles.<sup>42</sup> In addition to information captured in National Communications<sup>43</sup> and Biennial Update Reports,<sup>44</sup> the level of detail on policies, plans, gaps and opportunities in NDCs, as per UNFCCC guidance, is at the discretion of parties, and as such, results must not be taken in isolation from other documents that have not been analysed as part of this macro-level review.

**Table 2. Assessment framework themes**

1	Gender policy and plan alignment
2	Institutional co-ordination across gender and climate change
3	Capacity building in technology
4	Mechanisms for measuring and monitoring implementation, sex disaggregated data and information
5	Financial resources dedicated to gender-responsive activities

39 WEDO, Climate Change Tracker, available at: <https://genderclimatetracker.org/gender-ndc/introduction>

40 Gender Responsive Assessment Scale in World Health Organization (2006), *Gender Mainstreaming Manual for Health Managers: a practical approach*, available at: [https://www.who.int/gender/mainstreaming/GMH\\_Participant\\_GenderAssessmentScale.pdf](https://www.who.int/gender/mainstreaming/GMH_Participant_GenderAssessmentScale.pdf)

41 UNDP (2019), *Gender Analysis and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs): Short Guidance for Government Stakeholders*.

42 Paris Agreement introduction.

43 Decision 9/CP.16.

44 Decision 2/CP.17.

**Table 3. Gender responsiveness of new and updated NDCs**

Definition	Qualitative description	State
<b>No gender inclusion</b>	<b>The NDC does not consider gender norms or gaps in its actions and there are opportunities to incorporate gender-responsive actions</b>	<b>1</b>
Developing awareness	The NDC mentions gender as a broad developmental priority, without including specific actions to integrate it into the NDC	1.5
<b>Gender aware</b>	<b>The NDC may consider gender norms, but can better address gender gaps/inequalities in their actions</b>	<b>2</b>
Developing sensitivity	The NDC considers gender norms and relations in planning and proposed actions, without specific targets	2.5
<b>Gender sensitive</b>	<b>The NDC considers gender norms and relations and addresses at least one of these by establishing a specific target to benefit women and men</b>	<b>3</b>
Developing responsiveness	NDC resource allocation is based on gender-responsive considerations and gender-equitable outcomes across mitigation and adaptation measures	3.5
<b>Gender responsive</b>	<b>The NDC considers gender norms and relations and proposes a series of actions to redress inequalities between women and men</b>	<b>4</b>
Systemic gender equality	The NDC shows evidence of gender equality throughout its mitigation and adaptation measures	4.5

The 54 members of the Commonwealth each have unique national social and economic circumstances, cultural dynamics and values, which define the current state of gender inequality; similarly, each has different priorities and states of advancement against its NDC ambitions. Due to the pandemic, in-country priorities have necessarily shifted, with least developed countries (LDCs) and SIDS hardest hit, which has affected their ability to operate and complete their NDC planning processes. Nevertheless, 20 Commonwealth member countries had submitted new or updated NDCs by the deadline of 26 July (see Annex 3), with at least a further 20 by COP26 (though these were out of scope for this report).

Unfortunately, three of the seven developed Commonwealth member countries have not reported on gender in new/updated NDCs but via Biennial Update Reports – making comparative analysis challenging. The remaining four developed countries have included information on gender integration.

The analysis is based on both quantitative and qualitative measures, with the latter involving expert judgements that are consistent across all NDCs reviewed. Results are presented as percentages of the sample, comprising 34 original (I)NDCs and 20 new or updated NDCs, to avoid skew from different sample sizes.

Article 7 of the Paris Agreement<sup>45</sup> rooted gender integration in adaptation activities, and coupled with global action on SDGs 1 End poverty in all its forms everywhere and 5 Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, at the level of the most vulnerable rather than across all of society and across both mitigation and adaptation measures. The Convention has gone to considerable effort to move beyond this entry point and mainstream gender. However, the LWPG encouraged parties to 'integrate local and traditional knowledge in the formulation of climate policy and to recognize the value of the participation of grass-roots women in gender-responsive climate action at all levels' under Adaptation Communications; words which directed attention on the participation of women at the most basic level, despite the references to 'action at all levels' and 'Priority area A4: Strengthen the evidence base and understanding of the differentiated impacts of climate change on men and women and the role of women as agents of change and on opportunities for women'. By way of example of how this linguistic skew manifests, only one updated NDC refers to women as 'agents of change', while references to opportunities for women above the level of grassroots adaptation measures, are scant.

45 Article 7 "acknowledges that adaptation action should follow a country-driven, gender-responsive, participatory and fully transparent approach".

Decision 18/CMA.3 guided parties to submit information on gender under '4. Planning process (i) Domestic institutional arrangements, public participation and engagement with local communities and indigenous peoples, in a gender-responsive manner'. From the results, it appears that this has given rise to a dominant trend of 90% of countries referring to gender primarily in section 4.1.(i), in the context of participatory planning.<sup>46</sup>

## 2.3 Language

Mirroring the journey from INDC to NDC, the language used in second round NDCs fluctuates between that of intent and of commitment and could in many cases be more ambitious. For example, mindful of the significant challenges facing **Papua New Guinea** as a SIDS, the NDC states a commitment to '**seek** to ensure' [rather than ensures] a gender-responsive and human rights-based approach in all related planning, programming, and implementation; or **Tonga**, which '**puts a strong emphasis** on ensuring' [rather than requires] the consideration of aspects such as gender, income, age, etc., when developing NDCs.

An example of robust language is provided by **Canada**, which:

*'... is committed to using Gender Based Analysis Plus (GBA+), an analytical process that provides a rigorous method to assess systemic inequalities, across the federal government to advance gender equality in Canada. The Government of Canada's Canadian Gender Budgeting Act came into force in 2018, requiring the Minister of Finance to publicize the gender and diversity impacts of budget measures.'*

The journey to gender equality is signposted by appropriate use of the words 'awareness', 'sensitivity' and 'responsiveness', but is not completed by them. Language is important to accurately report progress, but capacity needs to be built for countries to better understand the steps towards gender equality. For example, some countries have erroneously used the term '**gender responsive**' where they should be using the term '**gender sensitive**' to describe how gender is considered and how actions will address gender inequality. For example, Uganda states its INDC is 'gender responsive', showing integration with institutional frameworks and targets, but this is not supported beyond the intent to mainstream gender into development policies, plans and strategies.<sup>47</sup>

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46 Note: the forthcoming Adaptation Committee draft supplementary guidance for the types of adaptation-related information to be communicated/reported under guidelines of different instruments under the Convention and the Paris Agreement, includes gender under "Section (h) Gender-responsive adaptation action and traditional knowledge, knowledge of indigenous peoples and local knowledge systems related to adaptation, where appropriate, missing the opportunity to elevate the consideration of gender under (c) National adaptation priorities, strategies, policies, plans, goals and actions; mitigation co-benefits; or (e) implementation".

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47 Uganda had not submitted its updated NDC in time for inclusion in this analysis.



# Chapter 3. Overall Progress from Across the Commonwealth

Each NDC submission must increase ambition and take on the interim recommendations of the Convention. As such, each iteration should be an improvement on the last, a step forward in the journey to decarbonise, a deepening of the extent and rigour with which actions are undertaken. This includes advancing gender equality as a social and economic consequence of climate response measures,<sup>48</sup> and which was assessed at COP 26 in the UK, and will be assessed under the immediate 2022 review of the enhanced LWPG and the 2023 global stocktake. The latter will examine mitigation, adaptation and the means of implementation and support in the light of equity.<sup>49</sup>

In line with the finding of the UNFCCC NDC Synthesis Report,<sup>50</sup> there has been a significant increase in the integration of gender across most

criteria used in this assessment in new or updated NDCs (see Table 4 and Figure 2).

In particular, countries have reported on aligning climate and gender policies and strategies, increasing the participatory nature of the planning processes, with 20% noting the involvement of women's groups, and a rise in countries monitoring and reporting on impact. These results are more fully discussed in Chapter 4.

From Figure 2, progression on gender integration can be seen in the shape of both graphs, which have evolved from being positively skewed to the left<sup>51</sup> in original (I)NDCs (light pink), to showing a more uniform distribution in new and updated NDCs (dark pink). Both graphs show higher scores/ratings in new or updated NDCs, and while the numbers

**Table 4. Summary results of original (I)NDCs and new and updated NDC quantitative assessment**

Question	Original NDCs Yes	New & updated NDCs Yes	Change
Evidence of gender reference being aligned with gender policy, strategies, frameworks or wider climate or development policies?	17%	50%	33%
Does the NDC analyse or challenge gender or social norms?	4%	15%	11%
Is there evidence of a participatory planning process for the NDC?	48%	90%	42%
Is there specific evidence of women's groups and national women's and gender institutions being engaged in the process of updating the NDC?	0%	20%	20%
Is there reference to capacity building, which includes training in the science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) sectors?	15%	25%	10%
Is there a mechanism for measuring and monitoring the implementation of the NDC?	28%	40%	12%
Is there reference to the collection of sex-disaggregated data and gender analysis in the NDC?	2%	10%	8%
Is there reference to any / gender-responsive budgeting in the NDC?	17%	15%	-2%

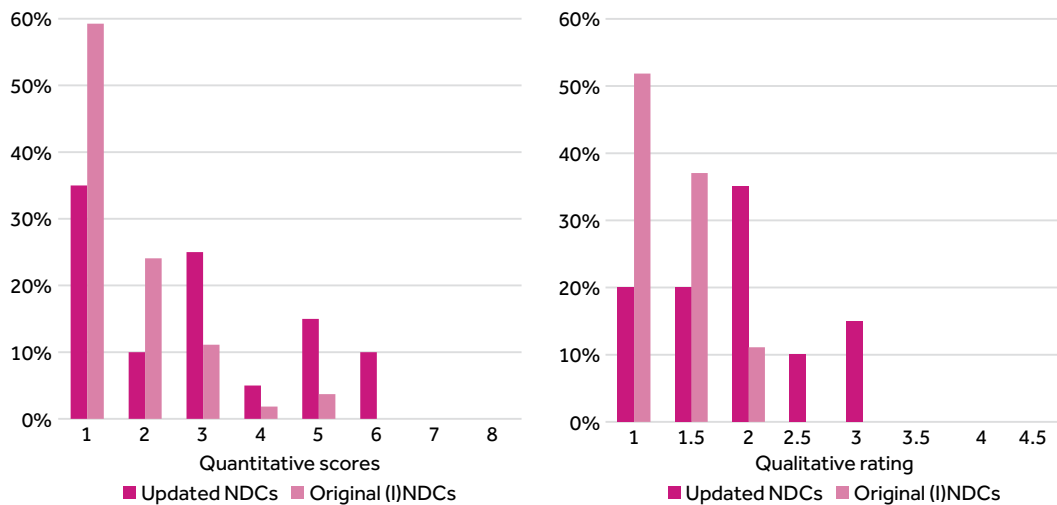
48 UNFCCC (2021), *Gender and Climate Change Brief for the Katowice Committee of Experts on the Impacts of the Implementation of Response Measures (KCI)*.

49 Paris Agreement Article 14.

50 UNFCCC (2021), *Nationally Determined Contributions under the Paris Agreement: Synthesis report by the secretariat*.

51 Which can result when all data have values of greater than zero.

Figure 2. Gender integration in original (I)NDCs and new updated NDCs



themselves are arbitrary, this reflects the increase in gender integration across the combined questions under 5 thematic areas.

There is a positive relationship between the quantitative and qualitative scales in both the original (I)NDCs and in the new and updated NDCs, indicating that the assessment is consistent.<sup>52</sup> However, some variance may be due to: sample size differences (54 original (I)NDCs and 20 new or updated NDCs); parties such as the **EU** having accrued points based on reference to the integration of overarching member state commitments to the European Pact on Gender Equality, but without expanding to gender-related policies and plans for **Malta** and **Cyprus**, the two Commonwealth EU member states; or because narrative information is simply limited, for example, in **New Zealand's** updated NDC.

Six countries making the most progress have developed interlinked gender and climate policies, conducted gender analysis and gender-sensitive NDC consultations, have assessed gender-specific technical capacity needs, and have invested in gender-responsive budgeting and integrated financial/ MRV systems tracking gender indicators (Figure 3) These are alphabetically, **Canada, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, the UK and Vanuatu.**

**Canada** and **Nigeria** are transparent with regards to their progress on integrating gender into their NDCs: **Canada** has moved from no mention of gender in its original INDC and 2017 update, to a

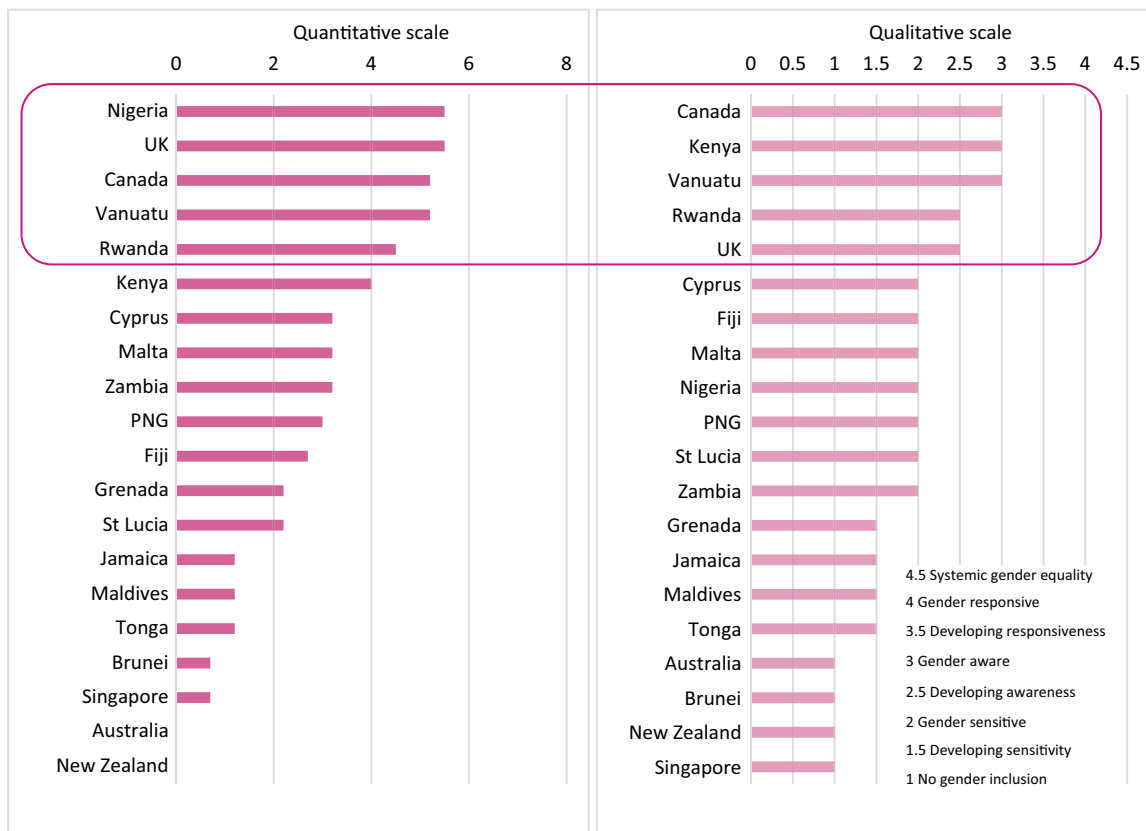
dedicated section on transparency and ongoing evaluation to enable its increasing gender equality ambition. **Canada** is challenging societal norms towards gender equality through a Quality of Life Framework, reporting on measures beyond standard economic metrics, using budget allocation to disproportionately benefit women, and addressing the root causes of indigenous women, girls and Two Spirit<sup>53</sup>, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, and asexual people who are missing and/or murdered. **Nigeria** does not presume that its NDC is gender sensitive until actions are implemented, repeating but not updating statements given in its INDC of five years ago that 'women have less economic, political and legal clout than men' and that 'mitigation measures can empower those that are socio-economically disadvantaged'.

Positive strides are being taken by **Rwanda**, with its more gender-equitable share of parliamentarians and long track record of gender-responsive budgeting. Meanwhile, following its departure from the European Union, the **UK's** new NDC includes specific policies and targets to enhance diversity, gender equality and women's participation. **Kenya** and **Vanuatu** have strong involvement of the gender machinery from outset of the NDC planning process, backed by integrated measurement, reporting and verification (MRV) systems that include gender-related indicators. Both have

52 Pearson's rank correlation  $r=0.707$ ,  $n=54$ ,  $p<0.00$ ; and  $r=0.841$ ,  $n=20$ ,  $p<0.00$ , respectively.

53 Two-spirit refers to a person who identifies as having both a masculine and a feminine spirit, and is used by some Indigenous people to describe their gender and/or spiritual identity.

Figure 3. Gender integration quantitative (0 to 8) and qualitative (1 to 4.5) rating



increased their ambitions and specific activities to promote gender equity – **Kenya** via three additional quantified adaptation measures, and **Vanuatu** by aligning domestic policies which support gender responsiveness to enhanced NDC actions and contribute to a more active role for gender in design and implementation.

These crucial elements of leadership (gender representation), governance (climate and sectoral policies revised to move beyond gender agnosticism and promote diversity), inclusion (involvement of the gender machinery from inception), and evidence based (building the required tools for data and analysis) pave the way for gender integration in a more nuanced, labour- and cost-saving approach to NDC delivery. They will also accelerate the efficacy with which nations can track, analyse and revise gender-responsive climate action by relatively well-co-ordinated institutions and agencies, though there is acknowledged room for capacity improvement.

Critical gaps common to most NDCs include:

- Addressing systemic behaviour change as a driver of climate-related gender inequality and as one of its solutions;

- Citation of women as agents of change i.e., leaders of mitigation projects and occupying governance roles as controllers (of resources) at every level, especially in energy, transport and industry;
- Genuine contributory participation of the gender machinery, supporting agencies and community representatives in the NDC process, with capacity to deliberate and influence climate mitigation and adaptation plans;
- Evidence of the practical resource capacity of climate institutions and gender machineries to conduct gender-based assessments plus and the bring forward the resulting data and evidence to support the NDC implementation process;
- Defined financing for gender equitable outcomes across mitigation and adaptation;
- Evidence of the capacity of the gender machinery to influence and integrate gender considerations into climate budgets and reporting systems;

- Mention of sub-national implementation plans detailing how gender integration will be coordinated, quality (outcome) assured, and how supporting agencies and civil society will be engaged.

Other countries show positive signs of progress but also of ambiguity. For example, **Papua New Guinea's** NDC states that the informal economy supports 85% of the population through subsistence agriculture dominated by women, but only 25% of 0.8 million beneficiaries will be women under the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) agriculture target; that is, 75% of beneficiaries will be men, perpetuating the status quo of the patriarchal society. The NDC also refers to 'access to electricity or affordable renewable energy improving the livelihoods of women through inter alia engaging in home-based businesses and educational activities in the evenings', thereby cementing women to the position of home-based beneficiaries. The stated commitment to a 'gender-responsive and human rights-based approach in all NDC-related planning, programming, and implementation' is doubtless well intended and, once the reporting system is in place, ready to evidence progress.

Other member countries have adopted robust language and intent around gender-responsive action, but have not yet shared details of plans, budget or targets to achieve the stated ambitions. **Grenada's** NDC shows gender awareness and could include actionable measures, incorporating gender considerations to 'ensure a resilient, inclusive, gender sensitive, and peaceful society'. **Maldives'** NDC submission notes gender in the context of climatic impacts and should be made significantly more robust given sub-NDC activity. The **Tongan** INDC set out towards 'a more inclusive, sustainable and empowering human development with gender equality', though the updated 2020 NDC notes only that gender was a component of NDC stakeholder consultation.

**Australia, New Zealand** and **Singapore** have not presented information on gender integration in their NDCs. While duplication of information in the various reports required by the Convention is not required, sharing progress on existing commitments and ambitions via the NDCs would help show commitment to this global challenge by these nations.

# Chapter 4. Thematic Results from Across the Commonwealth

## 4.1 Introductory questions

### 4.1.1 Inclusion of gender

All parties are invited to submit information across their national reporting requirements on their efforts to implement the enhanced Lima Work Programme on Gender (LWPG). This includes the NDCs, in which both ambition and progress updates are presented. A total of 20 Commonwealth member countries had submitted their updated or new NDCs by 26 July 2021 from across the 5 Commonwealth regions (Figure 4).

Commonwealth member countries referring to gender, gender equality, men, boys, women, females or girls in their updated NDCs significantly increased, by 34% (from 46% in the original (I) NDCs to 80% in the new or updated NDCs). This mirrors the broader UNFCCC results (from 29% to 85%), in which 'Parties are increasingly recognizing gender integration to enhance the ambition and effectiveness of their climate action'.<sup>54</sup>

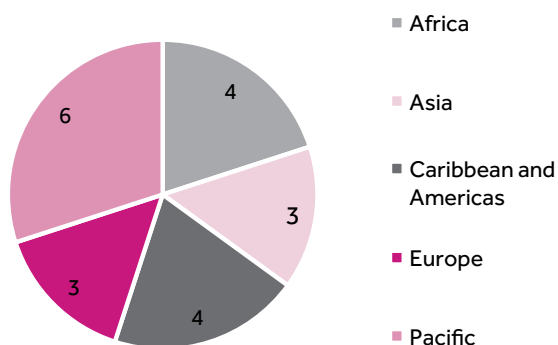
**Canada**, the **EU** and the **UK** position gender in the context of equality, human rights or social inclusion, through respective national or transnational gender and human rights conventions, such as

the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Member States to the European Pact on Gender Equality, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, or the UK Equality Act. **Canada** references gender throughout, and in particular under the goal of a Just Transition and considerations of equity and fairness. **Grenada**, **Nigeria** and **Papua New Guinea** position gender in their introductory statements, linking to national gender policies or plans, and along with the **EU**, **Kenya**, **Nigeria**, **Rwanda** and **Vanuatu**, include references throughout their NDCs. These countries show intent, and the majority follow through with ways to achieve gender-related ambitions, which have increased alongside GHG emissions reduction ambitions.

**Fiji**, **Grenada**, **Jamaica**, **Nigeria**, **Papua New Guinea**, **Rwanda**, **Saint Lucia**, **Vanuatu** and **Zambia** reference gender in the context of the SDGs and national circumstances; in the context of national goals or policies on gender; or in institutional arrangements, planning processes, and monitoring or implementation plans. **Saint Lucia** has made significant progress, including a dedicated section on mainstreaming gender and youth in national strategic climate change planning and programming across government.

**Maldives** and **Tonga** mention gender only superficially, while four developed countries scoring well on the Human Development Gender Inequality Index<sup>55</sup> and Gender Gap Report<sup>56</sup> (respective ranks in brackets), made no reference to gender in their original (I)NDCs or their recent updates: **Singapore (12/54)**, **Australia (25/50)**, **New Zealand (33/4)** and **Brunei (60/111)**. Of note is the highly gender-exclusive parliamentary positions (9.1% held by women) in **Brunei**, as compared with the other three countries with between 23.0% and 40.8%. This becomes important when considering gender representation and gender-sensitive decision-making within the climate change governance

**Figure 4. Commonwealth member countries submitting new or updated NDCs by 26 July 2021**



54 UNFCCC (2021), *Nationally Determined Contributions under the Paris Agreement: Synthesis report by the secretariat*.

55 UNDP, *Gender Inequality Index (GII)*, available at: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/gender-inequality-index-gii>

56 World Economic Forum (2021), *Gender Gap Report 2021*.

bodies, the Brunei Darussalam National Council on Climate Change<sup>57</sup> and Executive Committee on Climate Change, particularly as this is Brunei's first NDC submission.<sup>58</sup> The reasons for the other three countries omitting gender in their own submissions are puzzling, given the high level of gender equality development assistance committed to other countries. For example, **Australia** could include domestic progress made in its NDC and 4<sup>th</sup> BUR by reporting on the 7<sup>th</sup> National Communication 'efforts to promote gender equality and the active participation of women', especially given the capacity building and support given to Pacific Island Nations on this subject.

#### 4.1.2 Positioning of gender as a cross-cutting theme

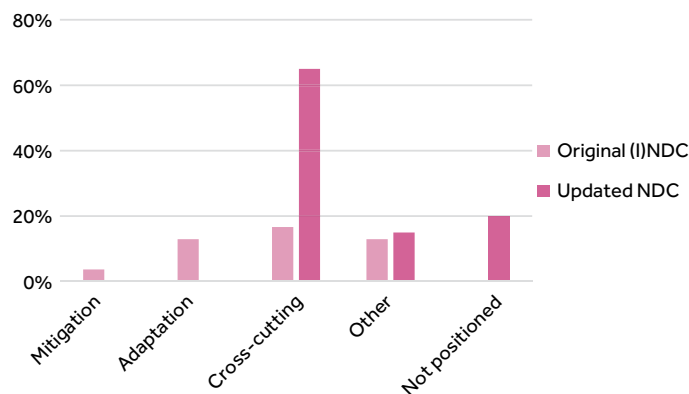
According to the 2016 UNDP analysis,<sup>59</sup> across 161 original (I)NDCs, 49.2% of parties made reference to gender mainstreaming or gender as a cross-cutting theme, though for Commonwealth member countries, the figure was slightly lower at 36%. These included **Barbados, the Kingdom**

**of Eswatini, India, Malawi, Papua New Guinea, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Tonga and Uganda.**

Representing a strong trend in line with UNFCCC synthesis report findings,<sup>60</sup> 13 (or 65%) Commonwealth member countries included gender as a cross-cutting or mainstreaming priority in their new or updated NDCs submitted by 26 July<sup>61</sup> (Figure 5).

The **EU, Nigeria, Rwanda, Saint Lucia and Zambia** all explicitly refer to the integration or mainstreaming of gender considerations in national strategic and climate-related planning, while others, such as **Kenya, the UK and Vanuatu**, cite gender equality and inclusion as overarching goals. Perhaps as a result of the overarching shift to gender as a cross-cutting commitment, individual references in the context of mitigation projects are largely absent, though references still appear under adaptation, such as the 11 social and environmental (climate) adaptation indicators under the Vanuatu National Sustainable Development Plan, or the four adaptation activities for 'gender, youth and other

Figure 5. Overarching gender positioning in original and updated NDCs<sup>62</sup>



57 Comprising four ministers, a deputy minister and co-chaired by the Minister of Development and the Minister of Energy.

58 A small group of 'youth' representatives, aged between 25 and 40 years old, reviewed the draft Brunei Darussalam National Climate Change Policy, though the gender disaggregation across the group is unknown.

59 Huyer, S (2016), *Gender Equality in National Climate Action: Planning for Gender-Responsive NDCs*, UNDP.

60 UNFCCC (2021), *Nationally Determined Contributions under the Paris Agreement: Synthesis report by the secretariat*, footnote 9 under point 21.

61 Note: the basis for determining whether gender is considered as a cross-cutting theme is not consistent across analysis by different organisations and may lead to differences in the results. For this report, if the NDC mentioned the words 'cross-cutting', 'mainstreaming' or included gender as a priority across development activities, it was considered as cross-cutting, as opposed to focused on mitigation or adaptation.

62 Figure 5 shows the predominant positioning of gender in the NDC, rather than the word count in each category, i.e., only one category is possible. The category 'other' denotes gender when cited only as background information or in reference to SDG5.

vulnerable groups', in which gender contributes to local-level mitigation outcomes in **Kenya's** updated NDC.

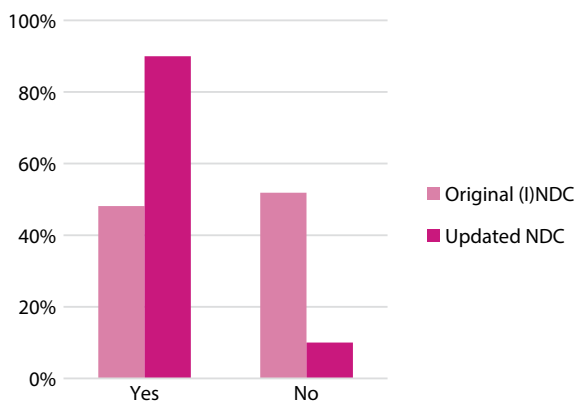
### 4.1.3 Gender according to context and role

Across updated NDCs, as in Figure 6., 90% refer to gender, primarily but not exclusively, in the context of a participatory planning processes – as per the NDC reporting template guidelines noted under section 2.2.

Details included by countries show considerable progress towards gender representation in the consultation processes, and some in governance, with three direct references to women as stakeholders in decision-making. These findings are positive, though tempered as a gender-equitable balance and the extent of the effective participation or influence of different genders on the decision-making process cannot be inferred. The ability of women's machineries to tangibly influence the NDC updating process remains elusive, because even though there are references to participatory and inclusive processes being undertaken, 80% of new and updated NDCs gave no specific reference<sup>63</sup> to women's machineries being engaged.

Countries which have prioritised gender in their NDC process, with the help of development assistance and resources produced by key agencies such as UN Women, the NDC Partnership, the Commonwealth Secretariat and many others, firmly

**Figure 6. Evidence a participatory planning process was undertaken in the development of the NDC**



63 It is possible that women's organisations were involved but that their engagement was not recorded or included in the NDC.

show progression with many including dedicated sections on gender in their supporting narratives – for example, **Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Saint Lucia** and **Vanuatu**.

Gender and women are positioned in a variety of ways across original, updated and new NDCs and multiple times within single NDCs. The number of women cited as beneficiaries (mainly under adaptation objectives) has risen slightly, as have the now two references to women as agents of change by **Canada** and **Nigeria**.

### Key takeaways, best practices and recommendations for prioritising gender in context

Although there has been a significant increase in the number of countries including reference to gender sensitivity, awareness or responsiveness in NDCs, the contextualisation for and specificity of how gender inequality will be addressed through climate mitigation and adaptation actions is articulated to varying degrees. Context and gender specificity fall to minimal in associated climate policies, and are insignificant in associated energy, transport or other key sector strategies and implementation plans that predate the recent submissions. These will need rethinking to reflect increased NDC gender ambitions and to keep pace with the five-year NDC cycle.<sup>64</sup>

Embracing the complexity of climate change does require a 'whole system' approach. However, the risk of positioning gender as a cross-cutting theme within climate change, itself a cross-cutting theme, is that it becomes only superficially integrated into governance systems that are intently focused on the processes to support technological and market-based solutions to climate change. These do not tackle the underlying societal and cultural norms that lead to gender-differentiated climate risks and direct/indirect impacts, and with increasing inclusivity, the specificity required to address gender inequality becomes less visible.<sup>65</sup> As above, in the attempt to mainstream gender, fewer NDCs now cite gender in relation to adaptation activities and fewer still in relation to mitigation activities. This

64 The process of iterative policy and plan updates is challenging for developing countries and SIDS with limited capacity and resources, and too often plans do not come to fruition without cross-government mandates.

65 Allwood, G (2020), *Mainstreaming Gender and Climate Change to Achieve a Just Transition to a Climate-Neutral Europe*, available at: <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.13082>

perpetuates gender inequality because, despite the increase in rate of adaptation funding, 48% of multilateral climate finance, 65% of bilateral climate finance and 75% of multilateral development bank own resources allocated as climate finance are for mitigation activities,<sup>66</sup> while adaptation investment is negligible for private investment which is a concern. Financial beneficiaries are those engaged in the design and delivery of mitigation activities, predominantly within the often unshakable power-seats of energy, transport, construction and industry, as well as suppliers of technology solutions from developed countries. These are sectors in which women's participation tends to be low across the Commonwealth. In plain language, the proportion of financial value gained by different genders through technology investment needs to be scrutinised and evidenced along the entire value chain when committing to gender equality as a cross-cutting theme.

As has already been exemplified for improving policy targets and increasing mitigation finance, creating the right enabling environment will help drive gender equity; however, developing countries and SIDS suffer from significant capacity gaps, exacerbated by the low level of grants versus loans, at around 30% of both bilateral and multilateral flows, and conditions which sometimes limit capacity-building activities.<sup>67</sup> In many countries, gender cannot be effectively mainstreamed across all key sectors by climate institutions and the gender machinery, given the current depth and quality of gender analysis being carried out and the capacity of the latter to influence decisions on climate mitigation and adaptation investment and programming. Often, it is the gender activists and civil society groups, out of which gender machineries are born, which are best placed to progress gender and climate integration – but they lack the skills to do so.

Public engagement also remains challenging, with ever-increasing loads placed on women, including new responsibilities for leading climate action at the local level, and as yet, few NDCs directly

tackle social gender norms and behaviours, other than **Canada's** incorporation of quality-of-life measurements beyond economic indicators into government decision-making and budgets under the Further the Quality of Life Framework.<sup>68</sup> The use of appropriately budgeted, fully participatory, gender-based analysis exposes gaps and highlights opportunities that can be used to improve results.

### Gender Based Analysis Plus – Canada

ensures its policies and programmes are *inclusive, equitable and barrier-free* and maximise the benefits for those most impacted by climate change by using Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+),<sup>69</sup> an analytical process to address systemic inequalities by assessing the personal experiential value of the effect of policies, programmes and initiatives across the federal government on diverse groups. This helps to identify gaps and adds to the quality and integrity of gender analyses.

The 2019 Impact Assessment Act goes beyond environmental factors; it also specifies that all major projects must include a participatory GBA+ process and consider 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. Further, it requires that mitigation measures should be developed in collaboration with those who are vulnerable and/or disadvantaged (for example, indigenous people, women).<sup>70</sup>

66 UNFCCC (2020), *Summary by the Standing Committee on Finance on the Fourth Biennial Assessment and Overview of Climate Finance Flows*.

67 Twenty-two% (22%) of bilateral climate finance and 24% of multilateral finance approved flowed to least developed countries and 2% of bilateral and 10% of multilateral funds flowed to SIDS in 2017–18. Standing Committee on Finance on the Fourth (2020) *Biennial Assessment and Overview of Climate Finance Flows*, Summary.

68 Reflective of GDP+ conversations at the Rio+20 COP; work by Steiglitz, J (2019), *Measuring What Counts: The Global Movement for Well-Being*; and Raworth, K (2017), *Doughnut Economics: Seven Ways to Think Like a 21<sup>st</sup>-century Economist among others*, available at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/departement-finance/services/publications/measuring-what-matters-toward-quality-life-strategy-canada.html> and <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11f0019m/11f0019m2021006-eng.htm>

69 Developed in 2011 by the Status of Women Canada, the GBA+ is a method for assessing systemic gender inequalities and the impact and experiences policies, projects and programmes have on people of different genders. See: <https://women-gender-equality.canada.ca/en/gender-based-analysis-plus.html>

70 Government of Canada, Policy Context: Public Interest Determination under the *Impact Assessment Act*, available at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/impact-assessment-agency/services/policy-guidance/public-interest-determination-under-impact-assessment-act.html>



Contextual recommendations to increase capacity, evidence and awareness:

**Recommendation 1. Increase capacity building for institutional staff and key sector leaders on the progression from gender neutrality to gender responsiveness**

Understanding helps to overcome misconceptions and increase acceptance of gender and diversity principles in different contexts, and helps governments to improve sector-wide results. Climate, finance and gender focal points should be trained, including leadership staff in climate and gender-related institutions and priority sectors of finance, energy, transport, construction and industry, as well as large-scale fisheries, agriculture and forestry, to improve understanding of gender and social justice as a systemic issue to be addressed with and through action on climate change. Technical experts with facilitation skills covering climate risk, gender and financial structuring are required to help bridge these gaps.

**Recommendation 2. Conduct gender-based analysis plus and gender-related policy outcome assessments as standard**

Gender-based analysis is a key tool for decision-making and action at all levels and stages of the programme/initiative cycle. Analysis should scrutinise the direct and indirect negative effects and positive opportunities for the social and economic empowerment of different genders for all proposed mitigation and adaptation interventions, including how these intersect with other factors of vulnerability and identity.

**Recommendation 3. Increase communications and raise awareness of gender-differentiated physical and transitional climate risk in civil society, government institutions and the private sector**

Using the opportunity of gender-based analysis, work with gender machineries and their supporting organisations to increase awareness and understanding of physical and transitional climate risk in communities and the role societal norms play in their exacerbation. These communications should be extended and tailored to senior decision-makers in the national and subnational government and in key sectors, especially finance, as a basis for gender-responsive innovation.

**Recommendation 4. Define and promote women as agents of change and technology solutions providers, rather than only as users**

The climate investment discourse should be moved from promoting women's access to resources, to defining and creating pathways to promote their position as equal decision-makers in control of resources. Women's group representation must be definitively increased, with the aim of increasing the number of women leading climate action at every scale, without increasing the burden of this responsibility by concurrently addressing division of labour by all genders. This means tackling social and cultural norms via communication channels, as above.

**4.2 Alignment of gender and climate policies and plans**

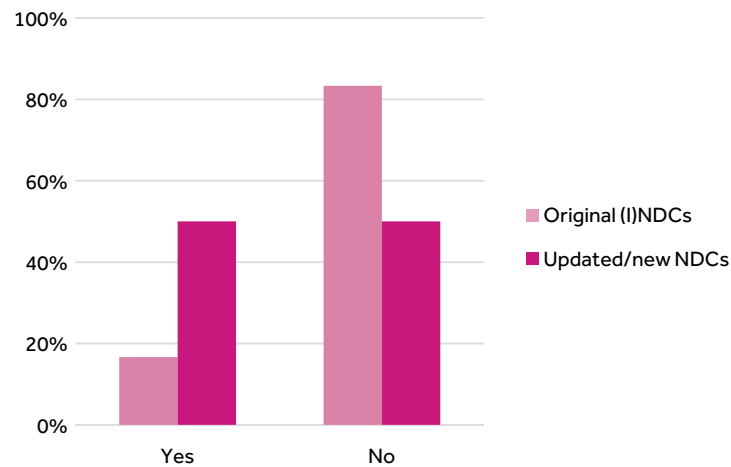
In NDCs submitted by Commonwealth member countries by 26 July 2021, references to NDCs being aligned with gender policy, strategies or frameworks have doubled, from 17% in the original (I)NDCs to 50% in updated NDCs (Figure 7).

This result does not account for links between gender and climate policies, which are not explicitly mentioned in the NDCs; for example, **Kenya** does not reference the integration of gender into climate governance and policy frameworks, instead referring to 'various laws to promote gender equality and provide for the protection against discrimination on the basis of gender'.<sup>71</sup> Kenya's National Action Plan on Climate Change 2018–2022 cites gender as a source of vulnerability, with capacity-building needs that are mirrored in the 2019 National Policy on Gender and Development. The policy highlights women's vulnerability, lack of control of (natural) resources and mobility, confirming that women's capacity and input must be factored into gender-responsive climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies. In **Jamaica**, progress is being made with the linking of the NDC to Vision 2030 Jamaica – National Development Plan, and the Medium-Term Socio-Economic Policy Framework (2018–2021),

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<sup>71</sup> The 2019 updated National Policy on Gender and Development does not mention climate change and is formulated on the basis of the patriarchal social order prevailing in Kenya, which nevertheless seeks to achieve equality and economic empowerment, equal rights and opportunities in the social, economic and political spheres for women, men, girls and boys.

**Figure 7. Evidence of gender reference being aligned with gender policy, strategies and frameworks**



which are underpinned by the three dimensions of sustainable development – social, economic and environmental – as well as equity and inclusiveness. This ‘joined up agenda’ could be made more robust when the 2011 National Policy for Gender Equity is renewed.

Examples of explicit links being drawn between NDC implementation and national gender policy or frameworks are found in **Canada’s** NDC, where gender is underpinned by the multidimensional Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which guarantees the right to equality in the law and equal benefit of the law, without discrimination on a number of grounds including sex, and the 2019 Gender Action Plan and the Gender Budgeting Act 2018 (see section 4.6), although Canada’s strengthened climate plan does not mention gender.

Other countries, such as **Fiji**, well articulate principles of gender responsiveness in their national climate change policies,<sup>72</sup> rather than in their NDCs. This disguises the significant progress Fiji has made on integrating gender into all key policies relating to climate, the environment and oceans in the context of its cultural and social circumstances,<sup>73</sup> and underlines the necessity for deeper analysis than this high-level NDC review can provide.

Foremost in its NDC executive summary, and as noted previously in section 2.3, **Papua New Guinea** ‘seeks to ensure a gender-responsive and human

rights-based approach in all related planning, programming, and implementation’. The NDC links to the National Strategic Plan Vision 2050, rather than to the dated Gender Policy,<sup>74</sup> which includes human capital development and gender, youth and people’s empowerment as pillars that promote gender equality and participation, as well as an inclusive, responsible and sustainable development approach (to adaptation planning).<sup>75</sup>

**Vanuatu, Zambia and Rwanda** also link the NDC planning process to cross-cutting principles of gender inclusion or responsiveness, as articulated in their strategic development plans, climate change and/or resilience policies; or in their commitments to parallel international agreements, rather than directly integrating NDC plans with their gender policies, strategies or action plans. **Vanuatu’s** National Policy on Climate Change and Disaster-Induced Displacement 2018 and the Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction Policy 2016–2030 include gender as a cross-cutting theme, and the updated National Gender Equality Policy 2020–2024 determines that work with Community Disaster and Climate Change Committees integrate gender through a minimum requirement

72 As with the Fiji’s National Climate Change Policy 2018–2030.

73 Asian Development Bank (2015), *Fiji Country Gender Assessment*.

74 The National Policy for Women and Gender Equality 2011–2015 and the Gender Equity and Social Inclusion Policy of 2012 are outdated. PNG has recently elected its first female President, but still has no female reserved seats in parliament – a decade after reserved seats were first proposed.

75 National Strategy for Responsible Sustainable Development 2014. Gender equality is referenced as an issue under traditional brown growth strategies, and women are referenced under inclusive growth strategies aimed at achieving equity.

for female representation.<sup>76</sup> Institutional, technical and financial capacity, that of the gender focal points and patriarchal values remain challenges to policy implementation.<sup>77</sup> **Zambia's** National Gender Policy 2014<sup>78</sup> considers climate change as a cross-cutting serious issue, with dedicated objectives and measures to mitigate the negative impacts on women, including increasing their representation at the national (and other) levels and mainstreaming gender into all climate change programmes. Yet there is no reference to these within the NDC, even with extensive activity such as the costed implementation plan. Nonetheless, **Zambia** launched its Climate Change Gender Action Plan (CCGAP) in 2018 to 'mainstream gender considerations and guarantee that women and men can have access to, participate in, and benefit equally from climate change initiatives'. This is a bold step forwards from the 2016 NDC, which mentioned women in the context of climate adaptation to alleviate poverty and improve food security, and in a country with persistently high levels of gender inequality.<sup>79</sup>

**Rwanda's** 2019 Environment and Climate Change Policy states the 'effective involvement of women and youth in environmental management and climate change intervention decision-making is essential and should be encouraged', and lists this as its first policy principal. The Gender Equality Strategy from 2019 to 2022 does not mention climate, and its recently revised National Gender Policy 2021, *Accelerating the Effectiveness of Gender Mainstreaming and Accountability for National Transformation*,<sup>80</sup> acknowledges climate as an issue, but the ambition for gender-sensitive climate action is constrained at the lowest level under 'Priority Area 2: Accelerate women's economic empowerment by increasing women's and men's access to affordable and reliable sources of clean energy'. Alternatively, this could be worded

as, for example, to increase women's (and men's) economic empowerment by building their capacity to construct, install and manage sources of clean energy. The most vulnerable are considered and could be elevated beyond their given status as beneficiaries, while in the quote above, men will also benefit under the acceleration of women's economic empowerment – making accurate tracking of this gender indicator challenging.

**Grenada's** National Climate Change Policy for Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique 2017–2021 gives gender special attention via its Climate Change Committee and focal points are in place. The NDC is linked to a variety of policies and plans, including its Gender Equality Policy and Action Plan 2014–2024, which includes disaster risk reduction. It could give further details of actionable measures to incorporate gender considerations into its mitigation or adaptation plans, to support its aspiration to 'ensure a resilient, inclusive, gender sensitive, and peaceful society'.

**Saint Lucia's** Gender Relations Department is currently developing a national gender equality policy and strategic plan, including Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), under the Enabling Gender-Responsive Disaster Recovery, Climate, and Environmental Resilience in the Caribbean (EnGenDER) project.<sup>81</sup> The NDC acknowledges a lack of gender-related data to identify activities that are specific to either women or men. So, even though Saint Lucia's stakeholder consultation process 'systematically and adequately addresses gender considerations in the project design, consultation, implementation and monitoring stages when project concepts are being developed, amalgamated or expanded for funding consideration', implementation success will, in part, rest on the participation of the gender machinery in climate action implementation and ownership of impact reporting, which are less well defined.<sup>82</sup>

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76 Oxfam (2020), *Gender and LGBTIQ+ Policy and Programming in Vanuatu: Opportunities, challenges, capacity, and tools for change*.

77 Ibid.

78 Zambia's National Gender Policy 2014, available at: <http://extwprlegs1.fao.org/docs/pdf/zam152916.pdf>

79 Gender Inequality Index, available at: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/gender-inequality-index-gii>

80 Rwanda's Revised National Gender Policy, Outcome 2.7.1 Increase the adaptive capacities to all forms of climate change and variability hazards for both men and women, available at: [https://www.migeprof.gov.rw/fileadmin/user\\_upload/Migeprof/Publications/Guidelines/Revised\\_National\\_Gender\\_Policy-2021.pdf](https://www.migeprof.gov.rw/fileadmin/user_upload/Migeprof/Publications/Guidelines/Revised_National_Gender_Policy-2021.pdf)

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81 Pers. com., Commonwealth Climate Finance Access Hub National Climate Finance Adviser, Saint Lucia.

Under the UNDP Enabling Gender-Responsive Disaster Recovery, Climate, and Environmental Resilience in the Caribbean (EnGenDER) project, which provided support for, among others, training on GRB and developing gender assessments for priority sectors under the NAP and energy.

82 UNDP (2021), *EnGenDER Findings Report informing the (in draft) Financial Sectoral Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan and Monitoring and Evaluation Plan, Antigua and Barbuda*, Future Earth Ltd, UK.

The **UK's** NDC notes that public authorities must fulfil responsibilities under the 2010 Equality Act by having 'regard to the desirability of reducing socio-economic inequalities and increase equality of opportunity [for a Just Transition]' and that specific policies and targets have been established to enhance diversity, gender equality and women's participation in the offshore wind and nuclear sectors. The Net Zero Strategy<sup>83</sup> makes a key commitment to upholding the UNFCCC Gender Action Plan and domestic law, though most citations of action to promote gender equality are made in the international context.

As **Cyprus** and **Malta** are both included under the EU submission, there are no explicit links to their respective climate or gender policies within the EU NDC. The **EU** Member States NDC is linked to the European Pact on Gender Equality 2006 and EU Energy Union governance regulations, which advise that member states should adequately integrate the dimensions of human rights and gender equality<sup>84</sup> in their integrated national energy and climate plans and long-term strategies, and report on these biennially. **Cyprus** has a non-binding National Action Plan on Gender Equality 2018–2021, with specific gender mainstreaming actions though the Cyprus Integrated National Energy and Climate Plan does not mention gender. Women currently hold 21.4% seats in parliament.<sup>85</sup>

**Malta's** Climate Action Act of 2015 is integrated into sectoral policies, plans and programmes, but not gender; and its Equality of Men and Women Act, amended in 2015, does not mention climate. Gender equality is not enshrined in the Maltese Constitution, and like Cyprus, it lags the average EU score for gender equality. Only 15% of Maltese parliamentary seats are held by women and 13% of ministers are women.<sup>86</sup> The 2030 National Energy and Climate Plan, the National Transport Strategy 2050 and Plan 2025, and June 2021 Low Carbon Development Strategy Public Consultation Document do not expand on the gender

considerations of proposed actions, even though the latter was produced following three rounds of consultation, which appear not to have included the Ministry of Equality, Research and Innovation.

It is possible that the lack of specific reference to gender by governing policy documents in Cyprus and Malta is due to the overarching commitment by both countries to equality; although gender-agnostic policies diminish the opportunities to be reaped by all genders in the European low-carbon transition. Across the EU,<sup>87</sup> the ratification of the ambitious €1 trillion techno-centric European Green Deal by all 27 member states did not prevent gender from being a notably absent dimension.<sup>88</sup>

Countries making no specific reference to gender policies, strategies or plans, despite references to gender in the NDCs, are **Maldives** and **Tonga**.<sup>89</sup> The effect of the pandemic on SIDS dependent on tourism notwithstanding,<sup>90</sup> the MRV system and NAP planned in the **Maldives** 2015 INDC have not yet been developed, which leaves action out of sync with its economic improvement.<sup>91</sup> This is important, as the updated NDC acknowledges the effect of rising temperatures and wetter monsoons on women's health, fisheries and the agriculture sector as a significant source of income for women and men. **Tonga** links its INDC to its Family Protection Act: National Policy on Gender and Development and Strategic Plan; and the Tonga Strategic Development Framework 2015–2025 for 'a more inclusive, sustainable and empowering human development with gender equality' in 2015. It could have showcased its work on gender in its 2020 submission, and this may yet feature in

83 UK Government (2021), *Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener*. The integration of gender into domestic climate policy could be made more visible, for example, equitable gender balance in the proposed 440,000 jobs to be supported by 2030. The UK's 4<sup>th</sup> BUR and 7<sup>th</sup> National Communication do not mention gender in a domestic context.

84 A Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020–2025.

85 World Economic Forum (2021), *Global Gender Gap Report 2021*.

86 Ibid.

87 All legislative acts in the EU require public stakeholder consultation across member states. Whether the more than 4,000 public consultation feedbacks for the Green Deal received (0.0008% of the estimated 2017 population of 511.8 million) also targeted women's groups and are gender disaggregated is unclear from the public website.

88 Allwood, G (2020), *Mainstreaming Gender and Climate Change to Achieve a Just Transition to a Climate-Neutral Europe*, available at: <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.13082>

89 Tonga is currently developing a Long-Term Low Emission Development Strategy (LT-LEDS), which will be submitted to the UNFCCC in 2021.

90 The risk to women in SIDS and developing countries reliant on tourism has been thrown into sharp focus by the pandemic, exemplifying the need for increased attention on gender in all climate risk initiatives.

91 Almost a doubling of foreign exchange reserves in the past five years; see Trading Economics. (2021), *Maldives Foreign Exchange Reserves*, available at: <https://tradingeconomics.com/maldives/foreign-exchange-reserves>

the NDC Roadmap and Investment Plan, to be developed this year, and link to the Tonga Climate Change Policy, which is inclusive and guided by the consideration of gender.

### **Key takeaways, best practices and recommendations for policy integration**

The marked increase of Commonwealth member countries referencing gender policies in their updated and new NDCs, is a positive sign of increased commitment to addressing gender inequality as part of national action on climate change, and that governance bodies overseeing climate and gender are beginning to find complementarity in their respective cross-cutting agendas. For example, **Nigeria** has melded its proposed action on climate change and gender in one plan.

**Nigeria's** approach is cohesive, with the development of an **integrated 2020 National Action Plan on Gender and Climate Change**, which mainstreams gender considerations to guarantee inclusivity of all demographics in the formulation and implementation of climate change initiatives, programmes and policies. As for the NDC, the plan was developed with the women's machinery involved from the outset, including grassroots representatives and ownership of the document by the Ministry of the Environment. It includes encompassing activities to mainstream gender from the community level to federal states and institutions across five sectors: agriculture and land use, energy, industry, oil and gas, and transport.

While policy development and government consultation on implementation plans provide good entry points to improve the gender sensitivity of NDC documents and awareness in stakeholders, the current levels of climate and gender policy, strategy and framework integration fall short of what is needed for gender-responsive outcomes and there are gaps in the coherence of and direct connections between climate and gender policies. This is mainly in the Caribbean and Pacific regions of the Commonwealth, but is also evident elsewhere. Fiji has woven its policies under one vision.

### **Fiji's alignment of climate and gender**

**policy:** Gender is a principle of the 2021 Fijian Climate Change Act, in which gender-disaggregated and -sensitive performance indicators are a requirement of the Ministry of Economy responsible for national climate change policy. Gender is one of three core pillars in Fiji's National Climate Change Policy 2018–2030, 'Woven Approach' to resilient development, in which the first policy mandate 'defines approaches intended to ensure that climate change does not exacerbate existing vulnerability, erode social cohesion, undermine human rights, or deepen gender inequality'.

The policy responds to SDG5 and links directly to the Fijian National Gender Policy, overseen by the Ministry for Social Welfare, Women and Poverty Alleviation, defining 7 gender-sensitive requirements for all climate change responses, with 'women as agents of change' as the first requirement. It requires the reduction of inequality, through 'investment and the use of gender-sensitive indicators, legal changes, and the long term economic role women play in natural resource management', among other requirements. These also include addressing structural social inequalities directly, through governance of adaptation and mitigation actions to ensure these are effective, efficient and equitable, to guarantee the transition does not reinforce inequality, and a demonstrable improvement in the understanding of the gender-differentiated and disproportionate consequences of climate change impacts.

Fiji's NDC also links directly to its 2018 NAP and increases its adaptation ambitions through the integration of eleven actions, including the prioritisation of gender in both disaster management and in climate action.

Several countries have gender equality and social inclusion policies developed by Green Climate Fund National Designated Authorities, and although some NDCs mention subnational diffusion, especially where federated or devolved, the connections to local/discrete policies, strategies and frameworks are weak. Noted within the updated NDCs are: the capacity of local grassroots

communities to meaningfully contribute to policy and plan development; data and information upon which to base policy decisions and reports; the existence or finesse of local-level indicators being produced; as well as time/costs barriers.

Recommendations to enhance the legal base, improve accountability and governance:

**Recommendation 5. Review legal requirements for addressing climate change and gender equality**

Legal requirements for gender equality in climate decision-making and action and climate sensitivity in gender action need to be established where missing and strengthened in existing governance documents (policies, budgets and action plans), with clear institutional accountabilities and requirements for collaboration (for example, between ministries responsible for energy and gender and including the subnational level). Synergies and complementarity in implementation plans should be assessed and exploited for delivery of efficiencies at the subnational level, with cross-referenced indicators (see best practice example from Vanuatu in section 4.5).

**Recommendation 6. Increase women's representation as decision-makers in key climate-related sectors**

Through the use of reserved seats or quotas, the level and strength of women's representation as decision-makers should be increased in key climate-related national and subnational government sectors, especially energy, transport, construction and industry. Terms should be included in tenders to promote technical and senior roles for women in implementation. Understanding the gender balance and impact of mitigation and adaptation throughout the project cycle is essential. Although multilateral funding requires gender assessments and gender-considerate outcomes, these can be aspirational and/or absent in bilateral or private sector funding. By ensuring gender balance in governance, such imbalances can be better addressed.

**4.3 Institutional co-ordination across gender and climate change**

As articulated by **Vanuatu** in its 2015 INDC:

*... agency level cooperate plans are already in existence but lack strong links between the various departments. At the human resource level, no*

*systematic assessment has been carried out to understand the required skills set, existing skills set and the gaps for implementing [NDC] initiatives. No human resource development plan has been developed. Most training is ad hoc in nature and not linked to a formal professional development strategy. At the information and knowledge management level, systems exist but are not fully utilised. This makes information sharing and learning of lessons difficult.*

Across developing countries and other SIDS, significant progress has been made between original INDCs and updated NDCs on establishing and strengthening institutional responsibilities for climate action, and undertaking participatory, whole-of-nation or inclusive planning processes.<sup>92</sup> However, tangible evidence of institutional collaboration on implementation of climate action with the gender machinery is hard to find in all but four NDCs, although many do state that processes are participatory and inclusive.

**Vanuatu's** NDC is one example of institutional collaboration for gender integration into planning, institutional frameworks and the MRV system, with indicators for human rights-based, gender-sensitive and socially inclusive approaches and assessment methods (see section 4.5). The Ministry of Climate Change Adaptation, Meteorology & Geo-Hazards, Energy, Environment and National Disaster Management, and the National Advisory Board, are mandated with co-ordinating all decentralised government and non-government initiatives that address climate change and disaster risk reduction in the country. Gender considerations have been integrated within some of the ministry's standard operating procedures and gender is one criterion against which project proposals submitted to the Department of Climate Change are evaluated.<sup>93</sup> The ambitions of the NDC are a significant step forward, given that women are absent from parliament or ministerial positions.<sup>94</sup>

**Kenya's** Climate Change Directorate is both the Secretariat for the National Climate Change Council and responsible for co-ordinating NDC

92 An inclusive or participatory NDC planning process was undertaken in 90% of NDCs reviewed.

93 Oxfam (2020), *Gender and LGBTQI+ Policy and Programming in Vanuatu: Opportunities, challenges, capacity, and tools for change*.

94 World Economic Forum (2021), *Global Gender Gap Report 2021*.

plans, actions and the MRV system. Subnational county governments designate County Executive Committee members to co-ordinate Climate Change Units and their gender focal points, seconded from the Ministry of Public Service, Youth, and Gender to the NDC priority sectors of agriculture, water and energy.<sup>95</sup> While the architecture is in place, silos of operation, patchy co-ordination, capacity and financial means remain barriers for ensuring the gender-responsivity of projects.<sup>96</sup> In **Nigeria**, the Department of Climate Change leads activities, interacting with an Inter-ministerial Committee on Climate Change, supported by a technical working group and three broader groups. The Federal Ministry of Women Affairs notes that women are central actors and contributors in the realisation of the environmental sustainability agenda, and that women's participation in leadership decision-making on climate change is paramount.<sup>97</sup> How the institution is involved in realising the National Action Plan on Gender and Climate Change is not clear in the NDC.

**Canada's** Minister of Environment and Climate Change is responsible for overarching domestic and international climate change policies. Responsibility for individual policies and measures is shared across thirteen federal organisations and includes provincial governments and indigenous people's representation. The Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change established the governance structure for the co-ordination and implementation of climate policy across Canada, including inter-ministerial fora, such as the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment and the Deputy Minister Committee on Climate Plan Implementation. The references to integrated action on climate change and gender from an institutional governance perspective, are interwoven between the Canadian Healthy Environment Policy and a Healthy Economy Plan. The Ministry of Finance and Treasury oversees Canada's gender-responsive climate budgets (see section 4.6).

In the **UK**, the Committee on Climate Change is an independent statutory body that advises the UK government and Devolved Administrations on climate change mitigation and adaptation, including emissions reduction targets. The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy is responsible for the strategic oversight of the UK's international climate and energy policy, and for the UK government's domestic climate and energy policy. The Devolved Administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have control over certain policy areas to deliver the NDC, as per the UK Net Zero Strategy. The UK Equalities Office is responsible for policy relating to women, sexual orientation and transgender equality, but the link between this office and those co-ordinating the Net Zero Strategy implementation could be strengthened, given the estimated £32–33 billion per annum of additional investment required in 2023–27 alone.

Institutional co-ordination for climate change under the EU Council is at the member state level for Malta and Cyprus and is not included in the **EU** NDC. In **Malta**, the Ministry for Environment, Climate Change and Planning is responsible for the implementation of the Low Carbon Development Strategy (2012), the National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (2012, largely complete), and action to address a forthcoming vulnerability and risk assessment. A Climate Action Board represents government entities, academia, business and civil society, and should also include representatives of all genders, a consideration for the Ministry for Equality, Research and Innovation and the new Gender Mainstreaming Unit established in 2019.

In **Cyprus**, the Department of Environment in the Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment is the national co-ordinator across ministries for the cross-cutting climate agenda and oversees the National Energy and Climate Plan (2021–2030), compiled and monitored by a Technical Committee of 8 working groups. The National Machinery for the Advancement of Women oversees gender-related issues in Cyprus.

According to its updated 354-word NDC,<sup>98</sup> the **New Zealand's** Minister for Climate Change established a new, independent Climate Change Commission in December 2019 to provide advice and monitoring services.

95 Climate Action Tracker, *Climate Governance Series Kenya 2020*.

96 UNDP (2020), Kenya Gender Analysis. NDC Support Programme 2020.

97 World Economic Forum (2021), *Gender Gap Report 2021*. Despite ratifying the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in 1984 and the Maputo Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa in 2004, Nigeria has less than 6% female parliamentarians and only 10% in ministerial positions.

98 Rated by the Climate Action Tracker (CAT) as technically and economically insufficient; see: <https://climateactiontracker.org/climate-target-update-tracker/new-zealand/>

Other countries, such as **Fiji**, have linked institutional oversight responsibilities. The Climate Change and International Cooperation Division of Fiji's Ministry of Economy is responsible for the National Climate Change Policy, as well as budget coding, monitoring and reporting. Importantly for gender responsiveness in a country where traditional barriers prevent women from providing opinions and feedback to improve outcomes of projects,<sup>99</sup> the Ministry of Social Welfare, Women and Poverty Alleviation is the secretariat for the National Climate Change Coordination Committee, which oversees NDC implementation.

In **Zambia**, the Council of Ministers oversees climate change interventions with policy guidance mainstreaming, resource mobilisation, monitoring and evaluation. The Steering Committee of Permanent Secretaries advises the Council of Ministers on policy and programme co-ordination and implementation across ministries, and is in turn advised by the Technical Committee on Climate Change. The Ministry of Gender oversees the Climate Change Gender Action Plan and is required to collaborate with other entities, but the details are unclear.

**Jamaica's** updated NDC is significantly more ambitious, but how gender will be integrated into its plans by the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation, Climate Change Division, in co-ordination with the Ministry of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport, is unclear from the updated NDC, although gender and climate change focal points are networked.

**Brunei's** institutional framework is built on the National Council on Climate Change, the Executive Committee on Climate Change, plus three working groups. How these integrate gender considerations into their work is not apparent from the NDC.

Several countries do not elaborate on their institutional climate governance frameworks, beyond noting the responsible ministry or agency. These countries are: **Grenada**, where the National Climate Change Committee is supported by a technical committee comprising government departments; **Maldives** under the Ministry of Environment; **Papua New Guinea's** Climate Change and Development Authority; **Saint Lucia**, where the National Climate Change Committee currently provides advice and support to national climate change-related programmes, with a stronger role anticipated in co-ordinating the implementation of the NDC; and **Tonga** under the Department of Climate Change.

#### Key takeaways, best practices and recommendations for improving institutional co-ordination

An example of institutional responsibility and delivery strengthening is found in Rwanda's NDC, which also acknowledges that inter-ministerial co-ordination mechanisms will need to be made more robust<sup>100</sup> through, for example, the Gender Information Management System and MRV systems (see section 4.5).

In **Rwanda**, the **positioning of gender as a cross-cutting theme at the national level**, with a dedicated Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion, is supported by a legal framework that mandates its institutional co-ordination across government and sectors (Figure 8). Both climate and gender are embedded into the Strategy for Economic Development: Vision 2050, and the first National Strategy for Transformation. Actors are assigned clearly defined roles and responsibilities at all levels and gender is a component of the climate change performance indicator checklist that guides the mainstreaming process.

During the formation of the updated NDC, the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion interacted with the Environment and Climate Change Thematic Working Group, and its Environmental and Climate Change subcluster. The Forum of Female Parliamentarians and National Women's Council participate at the national level, supporting gender focal points at the district level, who are deployed across sectors; this presents some capacity challenges.<sup>101</sup> The revised National Gender Policy 2021:

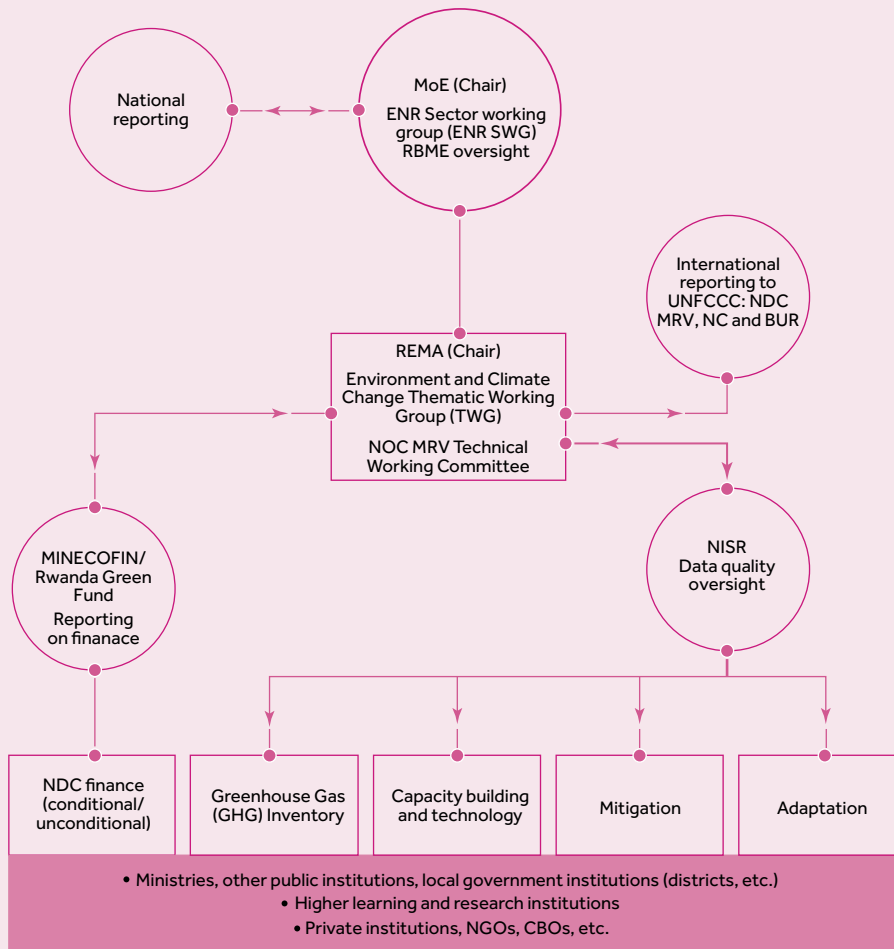
99 Personal communication (Oct 2021), Fiji Climate Change and International Cooperation Division.

100 Rwanda Updated NDC 2020.

101 The Rwanda Environment Management Authority is building capacity in women spokespersons, but resources are constrained.



Figure 8. Rwanda's NDC institutional structure, 2020



Accelerating the Effectiveness of Gender Mainstreaming and Accountability for National Transformation,<sup>102</sup> requires all sectors to have

gender strategies. They unite in overlapping cluster working groups to share information, assess gaps and create solutions.

The political, cultural and capacity challenges to institutionalise gender equality in developing countries and SIDS are many and varied,<sup>103</sup> but good progress has been made on collaboration between institutions responsible climate or gender during the NDC participatory planning process.

Institutional lines of responsibility, mention of inclusive workshops, and reporting oversight for gender integration are included in NDCs, but the engagement tools and management practices to promote effective institutional collaboration behind

the gender-sensitive or responsive narrative are not robustly substantiated – the *how* is missing. For example, quality control and assurance measures, both within and beyond agencies and extending into the private and third sectors, are absent. Assessing short-term impact in gender outcomes in advance of the next Lima Work Programme on Gender review and the broader 2023 stocktake will be challenging, with this compounded where undemocratic or patriarchal cultures prevail.

It is also apparent that under competing priorities and the effects of the COVID pandemic, developing countries and SIDS are severely limited by their human resource capacity across institutions to effectively manage, co-ordinate and report gender impact of measures aspired

102 The ambition for climate action is at the lowest level of economic opportunity: 2.6.4. Increase women's and men's access to affordable and reliable sources of clean energy.

103 Various reports by Future Earth Ltd; EnGen Collaborative and Canari under the UNDP EnGenDER project.

to.<sup>104</sup> The same is true for gender machinery support agencies and community groups, which suffer survey fatigue, on top of household, income generation and caring responsibilities.

Recommendations to build understanding, collaboration and co-ordination:

**Recommendation 7. Conduct capacity needs assessment across gender machineries and supporting agencies**

Countries not articulating their capacity support needs for improved reporting of their NDCs should recall Article 13, paragraphs 14 and 15 of the Paris Agreement: 'Support shall be provided to developing country Parties for the implementation of Article 13 of the Paris Agreement and for the building of transparency-related capacity of developing country Parties on a continuous basis'. This includes assessing the skills capacity of gender machineries and supporting agencies to interact with and influence key public and private sectors at all levels; and assessing resources available to fulfil NDC gender-related reporting requirements.

**Recommendation 8. Require climate institutions and gender machineries to collaborate intensively**

Institutions with responsibility for climate or gender must work much more intensively together on the delivery of their respective remits to improve gender-responsive climate action and climate-related gender equality actions. Beyond attending joint working groups, they should incorporate joint visioning, joint budgeting decisions, joint implementation and joint impact assessments in cross-government integrated plans, to support national and international goals and meaningfully include women's groups in deliberations at all stages in the project cycle. This is more costly and time consuming, but makes for better outcomes.

**Recommendation 9. Use updated tools and management systems to improve co-ordination, including at the subnational and local levels**

More rigorous quality control and assurance mechanisms should be introduced to improve gender-related outcomes across implementing entities. This requires capacity and budget support to invest in the up-to-date tools and management systems, especially at the subnational and local

levels; for transparency, consistent senior-level oversight should be required, along with participation of local-level representatives at key planning, reviewing and decision-making meetings when results are disseminated.

**4.4 Capacity building in technology**

To deliver against the NDCs, all countries will need a qualified workforce, with strong expertise in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects. Some Commonwealth member countries, **Barbados**, **The Gambia** and **Seychelles**, noted the requirement in their INDCs in 2015. Almost all (I) NDCs and new and updated NDCs from developing countries and SIDS refer to large capacity gaps, which will need to be overcome to implement their NDCs. Yet 75% still make no specific mention of capacity building for STEM subject/sector training.<sup>105</sup>

No NDC acknowledges a capacity gap with regards to national expertise on gender, which is noteworthy because to fulfil the ambitions of gender-responsive NDCs, all countries will need to invest considerably more in the abilities of their gender machineries and gender focal points (where present). These must effectively and credibly co-deliver alongside climate-related institutions, and increasingly with the private sector, not only on gender action but at the intersection of climate and gender action.

With regards to technology capacity needs, the **UK's** NDC cites funding the Institute of Physics to deliver an Improving Gender Balance research trial as its action to support gender balance through programmes in physics and computing to increase STEM take up among girls. **Canada** includes a budget to deliver its Future Skills initiative, and the **EU** notes that a Just Transition Mechanism and Fund will be created, through which training and skills development can be funded along with regional development initiatives.

The **Nigerian** guarantee of inclusivity for all demographics in the National Action Plan on Gender and Climate Change notwithstanding, the NDC acknowledges that actions are mainly focused on the poorest women as beneficiaries and relate to capacity building. Both the NDC and the forthcoming Long Term Low Emissions Development Strategy contain significant

104 GGGI (2020), *Preliminary Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Assessment Report*. Papua New Guinea Climate-Resilient Green Growth (CRGG) Project.

105 A drop of 10% from original (I)NDCs.

engineering projects, such as supply contracts for 100,000 additional buses; the conversion of all steam turbines to combined cycle turbines; and the further development of on/off-grid renewable energy, with 250,000 green jobs, all of which should be reviewed for gender benefits at all levels.

Specific technology needs are listed by **Rwanda**, including access to and overcoming barriers to clean technology diffusion; renewable energy and energy efficiency promotion; and advanced IT-enabled data processes and tools to improve information, monitoring and evaluation systems, to really understand where and how impact has occurred.

**Kenya** includes many adaptation commitments that require technology, but not all are made gender specific. Those that are target 'the uptake of adaptation technology especially of women, youth and other vulnerable groups, incorporating scientific and indigenous knowledge', for improved access, promotion and transfer of technologies.

Like many developing countries, **Fiji** acknowledges its capacity gaps, including with which to assess and monitor economy-wide emissions, and that significant capacity building, technology transfer and finance will be required.<sup>106</sup> A commitment to gender as a key consideration in both programming finance and capacity building is made, as is the necessary focus on 'communications and robust monitoring systems to ensure equity, justice, inclusion, transparency, and accountability in all climate actions'. **Papua New Guinea's** NDC acknowledges the gender digital gap and cites the need for a gender-responsive technology needs assessment, among other requirements.

**Saint Lucia** cites data capacity requirements to update its agriculture, forestry and other land use (AFOLU) targets and, *inter alia*, for its fishery sector to better manage climate risk, as well as linking capacity to the Just Transition under SDGs 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth and 9 Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure. **Jamaica** aspires to technology adoption and the development of capacity to enable this, but highlights the need for financial resources to undertake the transition balanced against other national economic priorities.

**Maldives** more simply states that the successful implementation of conditional and/or unconditional NDC targets will be subject to available finance, technology and capacity assistance from the

international community. This is a sentiment echoed by **Grenada, Tonga, Vanuatu** and **Zambia**, which highlight the need for capacity building across most sectors referenced in their NDCs.

**Australia, Canada, the EU, New Zealand, Singapore** and the **UK**, all contribute to building capacity across key NDC implementation sectors in developing countries. Within their own NDCs, **Australia, New Zealand** and **Singapore** make no mention of STEM capacity building; rather, details on overseas capacity building are noted in BURs.

**Australia** includes a new Technology Co-Investment Fund as part of financing behind its New Technology Investment Roadmap, which is overseen by a gender unequal Technology Investment Advisory Council,<sup>107</sup> and has just allocated part of its Women's Budget Statement to STEM careers for women. **Brunei** cites the need to strengthen institutional capacity and policy frameworks for effective implementation of adaptation and community-based disaster risk plans.

### Key takeaways, best practices and recommendations for building technical capacity

Technology capacity-building requirements differ widely across Commonwealth member countries. For developing countries and SIDS, these are often cited in response to improving resilience as informed by technology needs, climate vulnerability and where conducted, by gender assessments, such as was carried out in Nigeria.

#### Gender-sensitive capacity building for technology development – Nigeria

acknowledges the retraining skills development opportunities in renewable energy, high productive agriculture, forestry and agro-processing, and fisheries. Its NDC also includes specific capacity-development requirements for women:

- In water and sanitation: train women in plumbing, water plant treatment, community-based quality monitoring systems and service provision at the state and rural levels.
- In energy and transportation: train women on the construction of wood-efficient stoves and small biogas stoves.

106 Fiji Climate Vulnerability Assessment (2017).

107 Of its ten members, three are women.

- In food security and health: train women community nurses to address climate change-related diseases and capacity building on integrating climate change and gender issues for health sector agencies.
- Under AFOLU: capacity development for federal and state institutions on gender mainstreaming in policies and programmes.<sup>108</sup>

These priorities were informed by a gender analysis carried out as part of the NDC update process,<sup>109</sup> which found a general lack of access to and control of resources by women compared to men in all seven priority sectors. This highlighted the need to, *inter alia*, revise recruitment policies, develop a monitoring plan across all seven priority sectors, with verifiable gender impact indicators, and allocate sufficient budget to gender-related activities.

Although most NDCs focus on access to and transfer of solutions, and some NDCs include innovation capital, the equalising role gender-specific human capital investment as another form of capacity building can play is an oversight in the local design, development and leadership of the wide range of proposed mitigation and adaptation measures and innovations.

Traditionally, key sectors have attracted, trained and retained men at the secondary/processing stages, both as decision-makers and workers, with women participating at the edges, in the informal economy or most often in administrative roles below senior management.<sup>110</sup> Women are seen as users (of technology, wisdom, resources), while men are seen as suppliers. This tradition is at odds with social change. Gender machineries need to accelerate their momentum and build the necessary skills to engage and challenge this via climate governance structures and in the private sector. By helping key

108 Training women on climate smart agricultural systems could be added.

109 The following were consulted: the Ministry of Power, Ministry of Petroleum Resources, Ministry of Budget and National Planning, Ministry of Water Resources, the Federal Ministry of Industry, Trade, and Investment, Federal Ministry of Transport, Federal Ministry of Environment, the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation, and the private sector.

110 Ibid.

sectors to understand, accommodate and value the different kinds of knowledge and skills that people of different genders bring, counter-stereotypical roles can be promoted, with businesses gaining as a result. For example, increasing the percentage of women on governing boards<sup>111</sup> and in parliament is positively correlated with innovation gains and GHG emissions reductions,<sup>112</sup> as well as co-benefits in health, care, job creation and economic growth.<sup>113</sup>

Recommendations to increase capacity and accelerate STEM uptake:

#### **Recommendation 10. Fast-track curriculum adjustments to accelerate science, technology, engineering and maths training for women and girls**

The pace of curricula adjustments to instil gender equality and human rights values as integral to society and a foundation of skills building for the low-carbon transition is too slow. Training staff, updating curricula and the promotion of course and job opportunities need to be ramped up quickly in developing countries, to attract women and girls into climate mitigation (and adaptation) key sectors that are in receipt of climate finance and private sector investment.

#### **Recommendation 11. Improve technical gender representation by addressing barriers to STEM uptake**

Social, cultural and financial barriers to STEM training as an opportunity for workforce entry by all genders must to be addressed and removed, via iterative public awareness campaigns that engage sector, religious, tribal and other leaders to tackle root causes of inequality over time. Gender machineries supported by climate institutions must more robustly advocate for gender representation in technology-based sectors, by engaging and influencing the public and private sectors at the right time in the decision-making and budgeting cycles.

111 Bloomberg NEF and Sasakawa Peace Foundation (2020), *Gender Diversity and Climate Innovation*. Globally, the growth rate of emissions from companies with more than 30% female board members was 0.6%, compared to 3.5% for companies without female board members.

112 Ergas, C., et al. (2021), *Does Gender Climate Influence Climate Change? The Multidimensionality of Gender Equality and Its Countervailing Effects on the Carbon Intensity of Well-Being*, Sustainability Vol 13, 3956, available at: <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13073956>

113 KPMG Gender Lens Investing, available at: <https://home.kpmg/xx/en/home/insights/2021/03/gender-lens-investing.html>

## 4.5 MRV systems, sex-disaggregated data and information

The UNFCCC standardised reporting requirements<sup>114</sup> and the 2006 IPCC guidelines do not require parties to include gender-disaggregated data in their national inventory, biennial reports or NDCs. With the transition to enhanced Biennial Transparency Reporting (BTRs) and scrutiny under Technical Expert Reviews (TERs),<sup>115</sup> countries will be required to track their progress against their plans and ambitions, as described in their NDCs. The evidencing of gender-sensitive approaches is already mandated for adaptation activities and reporting gender-specific societal outcomes of mitigation activities is just as important.

Commonwealth member countries with an MRV system in place have increased from 12% in original (I)NDCs to 40% in new/updated NDCs. Almost all, 18/20 (90%), do not reference gender indicators or the collection of sex-disaggregated data and/or gender analysis.

In a pioneering move to capture the essence of life's experiential value, **Canada's** federated states are required to report under the Pan-Canadian Framework, while the Federal government must incorporate quality-of-life measurements into its decision-making, making adjustments to the Gender Results Framework through six key areas to advance gender equality.

**Rwanda's** MRV is backed by an institutional structure (see chapter 4.3) in which the Ministry of Environment chairs a Sector Working Group with the responsibility to monitor and evaluate the gender-responsive implementation of its NDCs. The Rwanda Environment Management Authority oversees an Environment and Climate Change Thematic Working Group, into which monitoring, evaluation and progress reporting on subsector priorities flows. The Gender Monitoring Office within the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion recently launched its Gender Information Management System, which will play a major role in

generating and disseminating sex-disaggregated data. The challenges of data collection and capacity for validation and statistical analysis processing are being addressed through capacity building at the district and national levels. Data will help supply the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda and will support decision-making by the Ministry of Environment on capacity building, technology transfer and finance, as well as gender impact.

**Zambia's** MRV system is being enhanced and **Kenya** has recently developed a gender-sensitive integrated MRV system linked to its existing National Integrated Monitoring System and County Integrated Monitoring Systems, through which financial support is tracked by the Treasury, with reporting embedded in its Climate Change Act 2016.<sup>116</sup> Kenya is currently strengthening tools for adaptation monitoring, evaluation and learning at the national and subnational levels, including for non-state actors. **Nigeria** is building its MRV capacity and implementing a new NDC project register; for AFOLU, it is developing a national forest monitoring system, which will involve women and youth in community monitoring ahead of a future MRV system.

**Grenada**, which currently collects data under its NAP, will develop a national data collection framework for long-term collection and verification of disaggregated data. **Saint Lucia** is working to collect and assess gender-disaggregated information for its NAP and forthcoming sectoral plans.

The **EU** is legally required to monitor climate and energy policy, targets, measures and projections<sup>117</sup> under the EU-wide reporting and monitoring framework for 2021–30,<sup>118</sup> the Member States Integrated National Energy and Climate Plans for 2021–30, and the European Green Deal. However, reported data on gender are incomplete and European Green Deal, which monitors climate financing and its societal outcomes, is now being readdressed for gender responsiveness through the EU Assembly of Regional and Local Representatives.<sup>119</sup>

114 Gender inequality needs to be raised out of the often-invisible vulnerability box. The LWPG review could consider recommending the insertion of gender into Decision 18/CMA.1 113.d (ii) and (iii) Each Party should provide the following information, as appropriate, related to monitoring and evaluation of adaptation: (ii) How support programmes meet specific vulnerabilities, *gender inequalities* and adaptation needs; (iii) How adaptation actions influence other development goals.

115 BTRs commence in 2022–24 for developed countries and 2024–26 for developing countries.

116 NDC Partnership (2020), Kenya's Integrated Measurement, Reporting and Verification (MRV) Tool.

117 Under Regulation EU 2018/1999 Governance of the Energy Union and Climate Action and the European Climate Law.

118 Regulation on the Governance of the Energy Union and Climate Action.

119 Paragraph 6 "emphasises the need for a gender perspective on actions and goals in the Green Deal, including gender mainstreaming and gender-responsive actions". See: <https://cor.europa.eu/EN/our-work/Pages/OpinionTimeline.aspx?opId=CDR-2509-2021>.

The **UK** tracks its GHGs and reports progress via the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, plus the Office of National Statistics, with analysis of the UK's carbon footprint by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. The June 2021 Joint Recommendations Report to Parliament by the Climate Change Committee recommends that the 2023 National Adaptation Programme addresses inequalities. To date, tracking of gender-related distribution and impact of climate-related action and investment are not articulated the UK's domestic approach.

Commonwealth member countries planning to develop MRV systems include **Fiji** and **Jamaica**,<sup>120</sup> **Brunei** under Strategy 6 of the Brunei Darussalam National Climate Change Policy; and **Papua New Guinea**, as one of the 5 key modules in its Implementation Plan. **Maldives** and **Tonga** currently have no means to track and report.

The developed countries **Australia**, **Singapore** and **New Zealand** expand on their MRV systems in their BURs, but not in the NDCs. In 2019, **New Zealand** carried out a Climate Change Risk Assessment and National Adaptation Plan. It has since established an independent Climate Change Commission to monitor progress against its NDC goals.

#### Key takeaways, best practices and recommendations for building the evidence base

The approaches of countries like Canada, with its personal experiential values approach, and Rwanda, Kenya, Vanuatu and Zambia, which have integrated their MRV systems across several government institutions with mandated roles for collaboration, show significant progress is being made on developing and improving MRV systems. However, across the board, gender monitoring, data and analysis remain serious issues,<sup>121</sup> Given the expense and lag time in establishing end-to-end systems, reporting with any accuracy on the impact of NDC implementation on gender-related outcomes within the next five-year cycle is already severely constrained.

**Vanuatu** has developed, implemented and enhanced an MRV system for the energy sector and for the National Energy Road Map 2016–2030. By integrating the tracking of its policy goals for sustainable development and climate within the same system, it is efficient and serves both domestic evidence-based decision-making and international reporting requirements.

**Process and outcome-based gender indicators for adaptation targets** in the agriculture sector are also related to the National Sustainable Development Plan 2016 to 2030 and are increasing in their sophistication to tease out root causes of inequality. For example:

- the proportion of men and women operating, and turnover generated by, agriculture small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in normal and (climate, disaster and environmentally) stressed times, which relates to the National Sustainable Development Plan Environmental Indicator 1.1.3 Average incidence of food poverty at the household level; or
- the proportion of men and women with adequate access to water in normal and (climate, disaster and environmentally) stressed times, which relates to Social Indicator 4.1.2 The number of decisions made by women.

Information access is both a trust barrier to be broken down between the climate institutions and gender machineries and an opportunity for supporting organisations to engage and build capacity at the local level, where people of all genders can be more involved in the retention of indigenous and production of local knowledge and data on climate impacts for their own resilience. This has not gone unnoticed by **Nigeria**, which will involve women and youth under its AFOLU national forest monitoring system, with the objective of ensuring transparent and consistent data. Quality assurance and control will be critical, as will the apportioning of appropriate roles to subnational entities and gender-based organisations to support this need. Furthermore, widespread communication to citizens on the reasons for outcome transparency though

120 As noted in its Third National Communication.

121 Data was raised as a hurdle for most developing countries in their INDCs. The resulting Decision 18/CMA.1 requested the Global Environment Facility to continue to support the operation of the Capacity-building Initiative for Transparency as a priority reporting-related need, but significant challenges remain.

data collection is essential to overcome barriers at the individual level; that is, repeat processes need to be made easy and non-intrusive, as survey fatigue is already prevalent in many SIDS and developing countries.<sup>122</sup>

Recommendations to plan and build the evidence base:

**Recommendation 12. Knowledge sharing and technical assistance for gender impact measurement, reporting and verification systems implementation**

With consistent MRV and knowledge dissemination across sectors, evidence of gender outcomes under mitigation and adaptation actions, and the increased resilience of all genders to climate change, can be improved. Commonwealth member countries with exemplary impact reporting systems should share practical contextualised practices with members that are still identifying and articulating support needs for BTR and other gender-related investment and impact reporting.

**Recommendation 13. Develop a quantitative and qualitative gender data and statistics action plan, linked to mitigation and adaptation measurement, reporting and verification data plans**

Evidence must be produced to substantiate NDC gender ambitions and evidence improved gender outcomes. For all climate mitigation and adaptation activities, gender data and action plans, including indicators and anticipated statistical analysis to support NDC and national sustainable development reporting, must be produced. Collaboration with national statistics offices should be budgeted for and increased. Offices can support with/recruit for increased climate risk data processing, analysis and dissemination. This should be phased in according to an initial light assessment of anticipated project impact on gender, rather than as a function of funding requirements (see recommendation under section 4.1).

**Recommendation 14. Collation of appropriate gender-related indicators, metrics, data and information**

For countries yet to implement MRV systems, capacity should be built in climate and gender institutions to accurately define indicators and appropriate metrics, process data in standardised

122 Pers., comm., Department of Environment, Government of Antigua and Barbuda, under NDC Partnership Climate Action Enhancement Programme, 2020–2021.

formats, analyse and present data to fulfil the increase in reporting parameters. Budgets for data collection and collation by gender machineries and their support agencies must be added to the cost of mitigation and adaptation measures from the outset.

**4.6 Financial resources dedicated to gender-responsive activities**

Many countries detail financial resource allocation in their BURs and do not duplicate information in their NDCs. Nevertheless, **Canada, Rwanda** and **Fiji** have referenced gender-based financing considerations or gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) / gender-responsive climate budgeting (GRCB) in their updated NDCs. Although **Kenya** has also conducted gender-based budgeting since 2014,<sup>123</sup> it is not noted in the updated NDC. Both **Canada** and **Rwanda** the estimated costs for mitigation and adaptation, providing transparent lists of the required investments to support the achievement of the updated NDCs. In 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 (GBSs), which are legally required to be submitted by all agencies<sup>124</sup> and are reviewed in collaboration with the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion. These broadly outline how activities will be inclusive, but could be more detailed – with line items tagged to both national budget and climate finance income going forward.

**Nigeria** outlines its leveraging of capital bond markets for investment requirements;<sup>125</sup> **Saint Lucia** and **Vanuatu** note overall mitigation costs, with adaptation costs to be costed in Sectoral Adaptation Strategies and Action Plans (SASAPs) and NAPs; and **Grenada** includes an overall cost

123 Facilitated by the National Gender Equality Commission, Kenya adopted gender-responsive budgeting at both the national and county levels in 2014.

124 Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion, *Gender and Family Priorities to be considered in Sectoral Planning Process Priorities for 2021–22*, available at: [https://www.minecofin.gov.rw/fileadmin/user\\_upload/Minecofin/Publications/REPORTS/National\\_Development\\_Planning\\_and\\_Research/Planning\\_and\\_Budgeting\\_Call\\_Circular/Central\\_Government/2021-2022\\_Budget\\_Call\\_Circular/Annex\\_11\\_Gender\\_and\\_Family\\_Promotion\\_Sector\\_Priorities\\_for\\_2021-22.pdf](https://www.minecofin.gov.rw/fileadmin/user_upload/Minecofin/Publications/REPORTS/National_Development_Planning_and_Research/Planning_and_Budgeting_Call_Circular/Central_Government/2021-2022_Budget_Call_Circular/Annex_11_Gender_and_Family_Promotion_Sector_Priorities_for_2021-22.pdf)

125 Nigeria includes reference to the *Task 2 and Task 3 Report*, containing estimated capital and operational investment requirements.

estimate, noting that the annual budget includes a process to ensure key stakeholders are consulted. **Fiji** assures of gender consideration when financing programmes.

As for all developed countries, the **UK, Singapore** and **New Zealand** submit Biennial/Finance Update Reports, with no information on their financial contributions to developing countries duplicated in their NDCs. **Australia** and the **EU** do include non-exhaustive lists of funds created to support climate-related activities, including the Green Deal mentioned in section 4.2, but without details of how any gender-responsive allocation or gender-equitable benefit for investors, owners, workers or product/service recipients will be assured, beyond noting that expenditure should be consistent with Paris Agreement objectives in the case of the EU.

**Jamaica** does not expand on its financial requirements as an indebted upper middle-income SIDS, but has made significant progress on climate finance with a Climate Finance Access Hub adviser since 2017 and as a member of the Coalition of Finance Ministers for Climate Action, as co-lead of the thematic track on Climate Finance and Carbon Pricing, by collaborating with the Climate Resilient Investment Coalition, and by listing the inaugural green bond on the Jamaica Stock Market.

**Maldives** intends to establish a public and private climate finance tracking mechanism and a National Climate Change Trust Fund, while scaling up annual budgetary allocations for climate adaptation and mitigation through its public sector investment programme and continuing the Maldives Green Fund. None of the activities state whether allocations will be gender sensitive or equitable.

Australia conducted gender budgeting between the mid-1980 and 1996,<sup>126</sup> but has since left ex-post gender budget analysis to civil society organisations. **Brunei** states it will fund NDC action domestically and explore other financial mechanisms. **Tonga** and **Zambia** and have not referenced any financial information or financial requirements, but the latter is pressing for GRB to be taken up by the Assembly.<sup>127</sup>

126 Austrian Parliamentary Budget Office (2018), in OECD (2020), *Designing and Implementing Gender Budgeting: A path to action*.

127 Government of Zambia, *Gender Status Report 2017–19*. Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH.

### Key takeaways, best practices and recommendations for gender-responsive budgeting

With the exception Canada's incorporation of quality-of-life measurements into its budget, publicising of gender and diversity impacts of budget measures, and steps towards gender equality through targeted disproportionate financing benefiting women, no other Commonwealth member country makes an explicit link between finance and gender-related outcomes through, for example, gender tagging.

#### Increasing budget transparency – in **Canada**,

under the 2018 Gender Budgeting Act, the Ministry of Finance and Treasury is required to publicise the gender and diversity impacts of all new budgeted measures. Impacts are measured according to the country's government-wide Gender Results Framework, which tracks performance against key gender equality indicators, with the help of the GBA+ results (see section 4.1 best practices). Since 2019, budget documents have included analysis of the impacts of individual budget measures on diverse groups, increasing the transparency of the analysis that is performed as part of the policy development and budgeting processes. All federal government departments and agencies are required to use GBA+ for all programme expenditure and reporting purposes.

Canada's 2021 budget will disproportionately benefit women in 34% of its investments, to help meet its gender equality goals.

Several Commonwealth member countries are already practising gender-responsive budgeting and others note that financing or budget allocation is/or will be responsive.

**Gender-responsive budgeting** – was initiated in **Rwanda** in 2003, with the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning being made the responsible authority for its implementation in 2008 and a formal requirement of all budgeted institutions in 2013. This has stood Rwanda in good stead for integrating gender-responsive climate budgeting (GRCB) into its mitigation and adaptation planning.



To overcome an identified gender analysis capacity gap, a gender policy management course and guidelines for GRB have been produced, to help public and private institutions plan, budget, implement and report to the Gender Management Office on gender-sensitive and -responsive initiatives.

Specific budget cost codes for GRB are not yet incorporated into the required annual gender budget statements for all ministries, but from 2017 to 2020, gender mainstreaming was considered across 18% of the national budget, indicative of the value placed on this priority by the Government of Rwanda.

Reference to a gender-sensitive distribution of finance, funds or investments, which in some cases target particular sectors and specific actions, would be a useful addition, because the UNFCCC Standing Committee on Finance finds that 'gender-responsive public finance is likely to be more effective and efficient'.<sup>128</sup>

The ramifications of omitting gender considerations across the value chain of mitigation and adaptation budgets, permeate right through the NDC process, the business of climate change and the desired gender-equality outcomes. Without address, this will deepen the inequality that pervades climate investment globally.

It is symptomatic that so few NDCs refer to gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) as the foundation of decision-making, which requires leadership, integrity and real ambition for gender outcomes – as declared across the majority of NDCs. Best practices highlighted by **Canada, Fiji, Kenya** and **Rwanda** are gaining momentum, because the national budget process involving all recipients is the bedrock on which to deliver national policies. This is evidenced via their integrated financial MRV systems,<sup>129</sup> to which applying tags for programmes with no impact on gender, those sensitive or responsive to gender, and those that aim to reduce gender inequality or promote equality can be added; for example,

128 UNFCCC (2020), *Summary by the Standing Committee on Finance on the Fourth Biennial Assessment and Overview of Climate Finance Flows*.

129 OECD (2020), *Designing and Implementing Gender Budgeting: A path to action*.

the strengthening access of women to enterprise funds, climate finance and credit lines programme in Kenya's NDC.

Although there has been increasing effort by multinational climate funds to mainstream gender into fund governance and operations,<sup>130</sup> only 33% of climate finance projects take gender equality into account.<sup>131</sup> There is also limited use of GRB, in spite of support from UN Women, the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and the National Adaptation Plan (NAP)-Global Network, indicative of the wide disparity between intent and effect. Once funds are disbursed at the national level, there is a lack of quality control over how it is spent and resulting gender outcomes.<sup>132,133</sup>

The relationship between financial flows, GRB and gender equality outcomes needs to be better explained. Personnel responsible for budgeting should be engaged and results statistically proved, by embedding rigorously monitored integrated financial MRV systems for improved accountability.

Recommendations to build rigor in gender-responsive financial allocations:

**Recommendation 15. Appoint responsible focal ministries for gender-responsive climate budgeting and fund administration, with strong accountability clauses to include lead gender machineries**

The common denominator underpinning successful contributions to gender-sensitive

130 This is despite UNFCCC guidance relating to adaptation projects in 2016, where 'a gender perspective needs to be taken into account when developing resource mobilization strategies, applying climate finance instruments, and ensuring equal participation in the deployment of financial resources, particularly at the local level'.

131 FCCC/CP/2021/6. The UNFCCC workshop on long-term climate finance notes that mitigation finance continues to represent over two-thirds of total public climate finance (mostly loans, not grants).

132 Heinrich Boell Stiftung (2021), *10 Things to Know About Climate Finance in 2021*, available at: <https://us.boell.org/en/2021/04/01/10-things-know-about-climate-finance-2021-0>; or the back-and-forth question of whether to fund at the national or grassroots level to insure impact.

133 Heinrich Boell Stiftung (2021), *10 Things to Know About Climate Finance in 2021*, available at: <https://us.boell.org/en/2021/04/01/10-things-know-about-climate-finance-2021-0>; or the back-and-forth question of whether to fund at the national or grassroots level to insure impact.

approaches is the extent of gender balance in financial decision-making and accounting. Governance accountability should be increased, specifically within ministries of finance/ treasuries for gender-responsive climate budget allocation and reporting, while at the same time appointing females into positions of responsibility and working with gender leads in appropriate ministries.

**Recommendation 16. Build gender-responsive climate budgeting capacity through climate finance focal point advisers within ministries of finance, and disseminate across public and private institutions**

Via the Commonwealth Climate Finance Access Hub, the assistance of climate finance focal point advisers should be enlisted (or they should be appointed, where absent),<sup>134</sup> with influencing status and an appropriate operational budget to build understanding and capacity in ministries of finance, regulators and audit teams on gender-responsive climate budgeting and to prepare for disclosure under the Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF) (and the Taskforce on Climate-related Financial Disclosures, which examines diversity in workforces as related to business performance and risk).<sup>135</sup>

**Recommendation 17. Instigate gender-responsive climate budgeting and outcome reporting under the Enhanced Transparency Framework**

All parties in receipt of international climate finance should be required to deploy gender-responsive budgeting across institutions and mapped across devolved/regional budget holders (to ensure discrete application), with nuanced tagging of programmes. This should be open to public scrutiny and a requirement of both the national audit offices and UNFCCC financing mechanisms, the Green Climate Fund, Global Environment Facility and Adaptation Fund, to fulfil global gender mainstreaming goals.

**Recommendation 18. Budget for the inclusion of gender machineries and supporting agency services in climate action and vice versa**

Agencies overseeing the financing of and responsible for climate action must budget for collaboration with gender institutions and supporting agencies, in order that climate-related outcomes benefit from their skills and influence and data with which to evidence impact can be used. Access to readiness finance from multilateral financing sources like the Green Climate Fund (GCF), to build the necessary human and institutional capacities, could be way forward.

134 The Commonwealth Climate Finance Access Hub (CCFAH) helps small and other vulnerable states secure funding to tackle climate change. The hub places experts in government departments, to support with climate finance grant applications, capacity building and project implementation. As of March 2021, the hub had helped six countries to access US\$43.8 million, covering 31 approved projects.

135 Taskforce on Climate-related Financial Disclosures, see: <https://www.fsb-tcfd.org/recommendations/>.

## Chapter 5. Conclusions

This macro-level overview of new or revised NDCs submitted by Commonwealth member countries to the Convention by 26 July 2021 shows a significant increase in the extent of gender integration. Inclusion is found in strategic priorities, policies and implementation plans. Several countries include dedicated sections on gender and youth, and cite gender under fairness and equity considerations. Almost all parties have carried out participatory NDC development, with many showing progress on gender representation in governance and consultation processes, though the extent of influencing and decision-making cannot be inferred.

Mainstreaming gender as a cross-cutting theme is strongly evidenced; however, gender specificity in mitigation and adaptation measures has been diluted and only marginal increases in the positioning of women as agents of change and decision-makers were found.

The contextualisation of how the increased gender ambitions will be co-ordinated, operationalised and analysed could be strengthened, alongside significant progress to implement MRV systems to track and report on progress, with a few pioneering countries now setting gender indicators and carrying out gender-based budgeting. Data, gender

and intersectional analysis remain critical stumbling blocks, which will impact on the reviews of the LWPG and must be improved for inclusion in BTRs.

The impact of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic on developing countries and SIDS, which are mired in practical, economic and capacity needs, means that tangible evidence of collaboration by the gender machinery with climate institutions remains patchy. The capacity of the former to influence NDC processes and the private sector at a strategic level also remains a question.

Critical for the next five years will be to break down the social and behavioural cognitive dissonance in key climate sectors and in society, as this will be one of the main contributors to gender equality and will promote values-based leadership. Practically, gender-based analyses that examine the personal experiential value of mitigation and adaptation actions for individuals provide an entry-point for the conversation to be started, backed by raising awareness of climate change physical and transitional risk on gender, gender-responsive and tagged budgeting, and importantly, investigating and promoting the financial opportunities arising from mobilising women entrepreneurs behind mitigation and adaptation investment.

# Annexes

## Annex 1. (I)NDC gender reviews and frameworks

Care International (2020), *Report Card: Where is gender equality in National Climate Plans (NDCS)?*

Commonwealth Secretariat (2019), *Gender Analysis Guidance Tool for the Caribbean: Exploring the Intersection between Gender and Climate Change in the Caribbean*, Commonwealth Secretariat, London.

Gold Standard (2017), *Gender Equality Requirements & Guidelines*. Goldstandard.org

UN Development Programme (UNDP) (2019), *Gender Analysis and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs): Short Guidance for Government Stakeholders*.

Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO) (no date), *Gender Climate Tracker*, available at: <https://genderclimatetracker.org/gender-ndc/introduction>

WEDO (2020) *Spotlight on gender in NDCs: An analysis of Parties' instruments, plans and actions supporting integration of gender equality principles and practices*.

Women, Gender, Constituency (2020), *WGC Advocacy Brief: gender-responsive Nationally Determined Contributions*.

## Annex 2. Assessment criteria and weighting

#	Quantitative questions	Weighting
Introductory questions		
1.2	Reference to gender (equality) or women in the NDC?	0.50
Gender policy alignment		
2.1	Evidence of gender reference being aligned with gender policy, strategies, frameworks or wider climate or development policies?	1.00
2.3	Does the NDC analyse or challenge gender or social norms?	1.50
Institutional co-ordination for gender and climate change		
3.1	Is there evidence of a participatory planning process for the NDC?	0.70
3.3	Is there specific evidence of women's groups and national women's and gender institutions being engaged in the process of updating the NDC?	1.00
Capacity building and technology		
4.1	Is there reference to capacity building that includes training in the STEM sectors?	0.80
Mechanisms for monitoring implementation		
5.1	Is there a mechanism for monitoring the implementation of the NDC?	1.00
5.3	Is there reference to the collection of sex-disaggregated data and gender analysis in the NDC?	1.00
Financial resources dedicated to gender-responsive mitigation and adaptation activities		
6.1	Is there reference to (any) budgeting in the NDC?	0.50

# Annex 3. New and updated NDCs submitted by 26 July 2021

Region	Country
Africa	Kenya
	Nigeria
	Rwanda
	Zambia
Asia	Brunei Darussalam
	Maldives
	Singapore
Caribbean and the Americas	Canada
	Grenada
	Jamaica
	Saint Lucia
Europe	Cyprus
	Malta
	United Kingdom
Pacific	Australia
	Fiji
	New Zealand
	Papua New Guinea
	Tonga
	Vanuatu

**Commonwealth Secretariat**

Marlborough House, Pall Mall  
London SW1Y 5HX  
United Kingdom

[thecommonwealth.org](http://thecommonwealth.org)

