



BEST PRACTICE BRIEF

Advancing Gender-Responsive Climate Action

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NDC 
PARTNERSHIP

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Contents

1	Introduction	5
2	Best Practices	8
	Reinforce Gender Mainstreaming in Climate and Sectoral Policies to Enable Transformations Needed to Address the Climate Crisis and Support Social Justice	9
	NDCs and Related National Documents	9
	Gender Action Plans	9
	Increase Women's Leadership and Whole-of-Society Participation in Planning and Design to Foster Improved Decision-Making	12
	Strengthen and Utilize Gender-Sensitive Data to Better Structure Effective Climate Projects	14
	Provide Capacity Building on Gender-Responsive Climate Action to Strengthen the Operationalization of Climate Frameworks	16
	Design Targeted Gender-Responsive Climate Projects With Clear Budgets to Translate National Ambition Into Community-Based Action	18
	Engage Women as Decision-Makers and Project Implementers to Drive Community-Level Results	20
	Integrate GESI Into MRV to Strengthen Evidence-Based, Gender-Responsive Climate Action	22

About Best Practice Briefs

Best practice briefs are analyses developed by the NDC Partnership Support Unit that summarize opportunities, strategies, and examples on topics related to the development, implementation, or financing of NDCs. This best practice brief is based on technical support provided by Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) to NDC Partnership members prioritizing gender equality in their NDC development and implementation.

3	Recommendations to Further Strengthen Equitable and Inclusive Climate Action	24
	Capacity Building	25
	Whole-of-Government and Coordination Mechanisms	25
	Access to Finance	26
	Targeted Stakeholder Engagement	26
	Planning and Program Design	26
4	Conclusion	27



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SECTION 1

Introduction

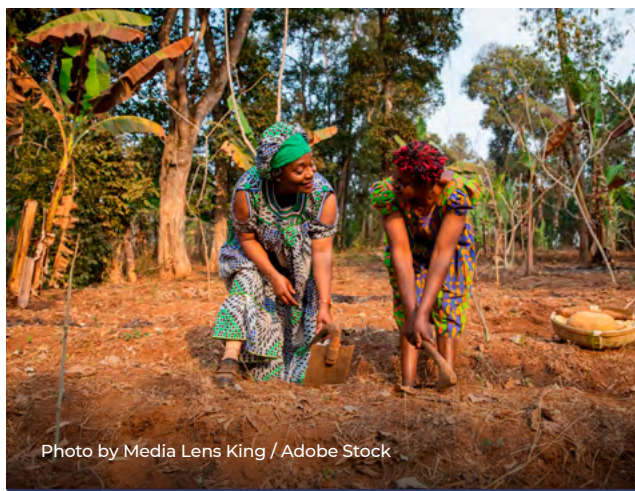
While the impacts of climate change are widespread, they disproportionately impact women and girls, particularly in rural and marginalized communities where access to economic resources and public services constrains preparation for and responses to climate risks. At the same time, gender-responsive and socially inclusive climate action is increasingly recognized as a strategic opportunity to advance broader development goals while strengthening resilience. Through Nationally Determined

Contributions (NDCs) and related policies, plans, and tools, governments are articulating clear commitments to gender equality and engagement across society. However, translating these commitments into financed, operational, and community-based action remains uneven. Challenges to comprehensive implementation of gender priorities can be attributed to gaps in data, effective planning, resource allocation, and coordination across sectors and levels of governance.

Drawing on experience from the NDC Partnership, this brief highlights best practices that support countries in closing these gaps. Through coordinated, country-driven support and strengthened collaboration across actors, these approaches enhance government capacity to design, implement, and monitor gender-responsive climate action while fostering continuous learning and more effective, inclusive delivery.

The objectives of this brief are to:

- summarize countries' experiences in designing and implementing gender-responsive climate action, providing evidence-based recommendations to enhance the NDC Partnership's support to members; and
- advance understanding of effective gender-responsive climate action with a focus on country needs to achieve successful implementation of their NDC commitments.



*The approaches presented in this brief **enhance government capacity** to design, implement, and monitor gender-responsive climate action.*

Best practices for advancing gender-responsive climate action, presented in this brief, include the following:

- Reinforce gender mainstreaming in climate and sectoral policies to enable transformations needed to address the climate crisis and support social justice.
- Increase women's leadership and whole-of-society participation in planning and design to foster improved decision-making.
- Strengthen and utilize gender-sensitive data to better structure effective climate projects.
- Provide capacity building on gender-responsive climate action to strengthen the operationalization of climate frameworks.
- Design targeted gender-responsive climate projects with clear budgets to translate national ambition into community-based action.
- Engage women as decision-makers and project implementers to drive community-level results.
- Integrate gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) into monitoring, reporting, and verification (MRV) to strengthen evidence-based, gender-responsive climate action.

BOX 1**Technical Assistance Support Through the Government of Canada**

From 2023 to 2026, the federal department Environment and Climate Change Canada worked through the NDC Partnership to deploy targeted technical assistance advancing gender-responsive climate action. This support was directed to 13 countries and one region to embed gender considerations across the full NDC lifecycle—from policy and planning to financing and project implementation. Critically, the support enabled a transformative approach, with women's full participation and leadership in climate actions, as opposed to an approach that viewed women as a vulnerable population requiring support. The lessons learned from the engagement in these countries informed this best practice brief.

Specifically, this brief draws on lessons from technical assistance deployed in:

- Burkina Faso
- Chad
- Costa Rica
- Ecuador
- Jordan
- Kenya
- Kyrgyz Republic
- Malawi
- Mexico
- Panama
- Republic of the Marshall Islands
- Rwanda
- Zambia
- Pacific Region



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SECTION 2

Best Practices

As noted in the [Sixth Assessment Report](#) of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), “actions that prioritize equity, climate justice, social justice and inclusion lead to more sustainable outcomes, co-benefits, reduce trade-offs, support transformative change and advance climate resilient development.” Supporting countries to advance GESI, especially capacity building, is critical to ensuring the long-term success and ambition of NDCs.

Through the NDC Partnership, developing member countries have strengthened their understanding of gender-related climate impacts and their commitments to addressing inequalities within climate action. The best practices summarized below illustrate approaches that can be replicated across sectors and levels of government to strengthen equity and inclusion in climate action.

Reinforce Gender Mainstreaming in Climate and Sectoral Policies to Enable Transformations Needed to Address the Climate Crisis and Support Social Justice

Mainstreaming GESI in climate policies, programs, and projects helps align climate action with the social and economic conditions needed for effective implementation. Achieving the ambitions of the current round of NDCs requires countries to continue meaningfully integrating gender equality considerations and rights-based approaches into their implementation of national and sectoral policies. These approaches are more effective when supported by high-level ownership, whole-of-government commitment, adequate capacity, and when mainstreaming efforts are budgeted appropriately and result in clear, actionable targets. Recent technical assistance for gender mainstreaming falls into two main pathways:

plan. In Burkina Faso (with support from the Global Green Growth Institute [GGGI]), Malawi, and Chad, efforts extended beyond strengthening the ambition and effectiveness of these countries' NDCs 3.0 to ensuring that the benefits of aligned climate action will be equitably shared and that women's voices are present in local decision-making bodies. Mainstreaming efforts through Mexico's first Biennial Transparency Report demonstrated that gender integration cuts across migration, adaptation, and transparency functions when ministries coordinate and collaborate to strengthen the integration of gender and human rights perspectives in mitigation, adaptation, and other key components of climate action.

NDCs and Related National Documents

Gender mainstreaming within the update of countries' NDCs represents a key step in strengthening these countries' climate commitments under the Paris Agreement. It shapes who benefits from climate action and how climate governance is grounded in inclusion and gender equality. When gender and whole-of-society perspectives are embedded early and substantively, NDCs become tools for advancing inclusion alongside ambition. This work was supported across multiple countries in ways that reflect both shared principles and context-specific approaches. In Ecuador, embedded gender advisors and local specialists brought sustained expertise, rather than one-time input, to mainstream gender considerations and concrete actions into Ecuador's NDC 2026-2035, develop and strengthen a Gender and Climate Change Action Plan, and monitor the implementation of gender actions under the first NDC (2020) and the action

Gender Action Plans

Gender action plans translate high-level NDC commitments to GESI into concrete action agendas with accountable actors and indicators to track progress. Development or strengthening of these plans enables countries to implement core principles of their NDC ambition. Mainstreaming efforts in Kenya were supported by both the State Department for Gender Affairs and Affirmative Action and the Climate Change Directorate and focused on institutionalizing and localizing the existing National Gender and Climate Change Action Plan at the county level. Ecuador's embedded gender advisor supported the operationalization of the Gender and Climate Change Action Plan and promoted its integration into environmental platforms. To strengthen the updated Gender and Environment Action Plan (PAGA) in Panama, the Ministry of Environment organized workshops to validate and develop an implementation guide, bridging

the gaps between planning and coherent implementation. In Malawi, the development of a National Climate Change Gender Action Plan positions women and girls as central actors in achieving Malawi's climate and development goals under the NDC and Malawi Vision 2063.

Gender mainstreaming is most effective as a continuous and evolving process. Formalizing commitments to GESI within national policies provides a framework for continued mainstreaming, serving to reduce inequalities and expand understanding of climate change impacts across society.

CASE STUDY

Malawi: National Climate Change Gender Action Plan

To support the operationalization of gender-responsive climate commitments in Malawi, the Ministry of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare prepared a National Climate Change Gender Action Plan (2025–2030). This plan seeks to accelerate climate risk management for women and girls by mainstreaming gender in the revision of Malawi's NDC and across sectoral priorities. It sets out specific steps the government will take between 2025 and 2030 to strengthen gender mainstreaming across climate actions, including:

- analyzing climate-related gender issues within each sector;
- embedding gender considerations in climate planning, budgeting, and data systems;
- setting outcome goals that go beyond participation.

The plan was developed through a consultative process, which included a series of workshops held between April and July 2025 with stakeholders from government and civil society.

The consultations facilitated the identification of capacity needs, targeted sectors for support, and priority actions. They also helped identify the role of civil society in the plan's implementation over the five-year implementation period. A validation workshop took place in October 2025 with key stakeholders from sectoral ministries and civil society.

Fred Simwaka, Deputy Director for Gender at the Ministry of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare, noted that Malawi is “ensuring that gender is mainstreamed in all ministries, departments, and agencies. Gender focal points will work across government to ensure the Gender Action Plan is mainstreamed in all sectors and supports outcomes benefiting all Malawians.”

By reframing gender mainstreaming as a results-driven strategy with high-level ownership, the plan positions women and girls as central actors in achieving Malawi's climate and development goals under the NDC and Malawi Vision 2063.

CASE STUDY

Chad: Technical Analysis for Mainstreaming Gender in the NDC 3.0

The transition to its NDC 3.0 represents a critical opportunity for Chad to transform its climate commitments into levers for social justice and equality. Gender mainstreaming was a core component of Chad's development of the NDC 3.0. To facilitate this work, a gender expert analyzed Chad's existing NDC action, drawing on the UN Women Scorecard and Chad's National Development Plan, Chad Connexion 2030. The analysis generated strategic recommendations to support the NDC 3.0 as a tool to increase national resilience and shift from a vulnerability-based approach to one of women's leadership.

To strengthen the development and implementation of the NDC 3.0, the gender expert developed a Guide for Mainstreaming Gender in Chad's NDC 3.0 and a Governance and Financing Roadmap. The guide and roadmap outline high-level considerations for government to ensure that gender equality considerations are mainstreamed across vision statements, objectives, actions, and monitoring and evaluation planning. The guide, designed as a living institutional diagnostic tool, is structured around the four governance pillars of (1) empowering gender focal points, (2) strengthening cross-sectoral coordination, (3) clarifying budgeted roadmaps, and (4) enhancing the participation of marginalized groups.

To transform the diagnostic recommendations into operational, budgeted, and measurable commitments, government stakeholders representing key sectors gathered at a national technical validation workshop. Participants identified key capacity

building needs as prerequisites for the implementation of the commitments made throughout the workshop and to be considered for inclusion in the NDC 3.0.

Through concerted interministerial efforts, stakeholders identified specific objectives to include in the NDC 3.0. For instance, proposed objectives include the following.

- By 2030, ensure that women make up at least 40% of all local decision-making bodies related to climate and risk management.
- Allocate 15% of national and international climate funding toward gender-sensitive adaptation measures, with direct access mechanisms for grassroots women's organizations.
- Reduce the time women spend collecting water and biomass by 50% by 2030 through the deployment of labor-saving technologies (improved stoves, biogas, and solar water points).
- Integrate gender-sensitive MRV indicators into 100% of climate projects financed under the NDC 3.0, with mandatory reporting of gender-disaggregated data.

The NDC 3.0 is designed to integrate gender equality into its planning, supporting the inclusion of gender-sensitive adaptation and mitigation measures that were recommended during consultations at national and regional levels and that will contribute to more effective climate action. These efforts will provide a framework for further strengthening of gender considerations within NDC implementation in Chad.

Increase Women's Leadership and Whole-of-Society Participation in Planning and Design to Foster Improved Decision-Making

Ambitious climate action requires looking at society-wide and economy-wide challenges and ensuring that benefits are also enjoyed by individuals and communities that traditionally do not have access to decision-making platforms. To achieve any intended societal impact, comprehensive planning and implementation efforts must be accompanied by thoughtful and inclusive participation by members of society. Especially at the local level, climate policies and projects should acknowledge the leadership of women and take steps to address barriers to their ongoing inclusion.

In Ecuador, a participatory process was undertaken to mainstream gender considerations and concrete actions in Ecuador's NDC 2026–2035 and the development of its Gender and Climate Change Action Plan. A series of interviews, meetings, and workshops were undertaken with government representatives, international organizations, and civil society organizations to gather information, including on implementation of the first NDC, taking into account gender approaches. In Costa Rica, the Climate Change Directorate advanced the integration of gender equality considerations in its NDC update through a series of consultative workshops with Indigenous Peoples. This included several workshops on the NDC development with specific requirements for the participation of women (see box for more information).

Increasing the representation of women, Indigenous Peoples, and other marginalized groups in climate leadership at all levels remains a challenge, driven by deep-seated structural barriers, including cultural norms and significant time poverty due to unequal care work burdens, which limit women's ability to engage in leadership roles. To help address this in Malawi, the Women in Climate Action Network supports mobilizing women and amplifying their voices to counter marginalization and advocate effectively for inclusive, gender-responsive climate policies and finance. Technical assistance was provided to develop a comprehensive strategy for the network, outlining a vision and priority action areas to strengthen women's leadership, advocate for policy, and mobilize resources. Support provided by Climate Action Africa, a Government of Canada initiative, built on this foundation to equip women leaders across the network through climate leadership training, communications support, and a dedicated write-shop focused on expanding the network's impact across districts.¹

Increasing the representation of women, Indigenous Peoples, and other marginalized groups in climate leadership at all levels remains a challenge.

¹ **Climate Action Africa** is a Government of Canada initiative funded by Global Affairs Canada and implemented by a consortium of partners—Alinea International, Econoler, and WSP.

CASE STUDY

Costa Rica: Consulting Indigenous Peoples on NDC 3.0 Development

Costa Rica is a global leader in integrating gender equality into climate policy, moving beyond viewing women as vulnerable people to framing women as key economic actors and agents of change in the green transition. To strengthen the inclusiveness and robustness of gender-responsive climate action in Costa Rica, the Climate Change Directorate carried out a national information and validation process with Indigenous communities. This consultation process followed the framework of the National REDD+ Strategy and General Mechanism for Consultation with Indigenous Peoples that has been in place for over 7 years.

Consultations included 22 local workshops held in 20 Indigenous territories, from a total of 24 territories, with the participation of 374 people (52% women and 48% men) from 110 communities. Separate from previous consultations, the leaders of these communities were explicitly asked to prioritize women's engagement in the consultations, including a national validation workshop in San José.

A gender-responsive dialogue with Indigenous communities on Costa Rica's NDC 3.0 was held in November 2025. Through this dialogue, the contributions of Indigenous women, as representatives of their communities, were validated and approved by consensus, resulting in the formal endorsement of five Indigenous climate contributions:

Territorial Planning: Use Territorial Environmental Forestry Plans as the basis for Indigenous climate governance.

- **Sustainable Production:** Strengthen traditional, environmentally sustainable livelihoods.
- **Forests and Biodiversity:** Adopt community-based conservation and forest management.
- **Gender Equity:** Ensure economic inclusion and leadership of Indigenous women and youth.
- **Transparency:** Integrate climate governance with accountability and monitoring.

Despite Costa Rica's relatively small territorial size, members of the 110 communities sometimes traveled for multiple days to reach the workshop. During a COP30 event in Belém, Adriana María Bonilla Vargas, Director of the Climate Change Department in the Ministry of Environment and Energy, shared that this process has been "very fulfilling for [the government] to have these priorities from Indigenous Peoples incorporated into the NDC, especially under a short amount of time."

Costa Rica's NDC 3.0 benefited from increased gender-responsive considerations drawn directly from communities, and added gender-responsive indicators specifically designed to monitor how climate actions impact men and women differently, particularly in the transport and waste sectors.



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Strengthen and Utilize Gender-Sensitive Data to Better Structure Effective Climate Projects

Countries can more effectively implement and track their NDC commitments by strengthening the collection, utilization, and reporting of gender-disaggregated outcomes of climate action across sectors. A comprehensive understanding of the sectors, stakeholders, and impacted communities involved in climate initiatives is critical to designing programs that achieve NDC targets. Partners can build on existing data frameworks through project-level efforts to report on sex-disaggregated beneficiaries and outcomes. Ministries can support national data structures to improve the consistency and sustainability of reporting on national gender-related data.

In many contexts, analyzing gender integration into existing policies is essential to strengthen the collection of critical data in the future. Through the development of their NDCs 3.0, several countries analyzed their progress integrating GESI into climate planning, which informed their NDC 3.0 targets and priorities. For instance, Burkina Faso, with the support of GGGI, reviewed its NDC 2.0 to measure progress to date and identify gaps in NDC implementation. This review was undertaken with a gender-sensitive approach to ensure that the benefits of climate

action in Burkina Faso are equitably shared (see box for more information). In Rwanda, GGGI supported the Rwanda Environment Management Authority to conduct GESI assessments with an eye to enhancing the tracking of gender-responsive projects following the country's NDC 3.0. The resulting GESI Index and Simulation Tool will enable scenario-based analysis across NDC sectors, supporting planners and policymakers to integrate GESI considerations into climate strategies, guide decision-making, and monitor performance.

As guiding and sometimes binding policies, the NDCs can offer a platform and impetus for future data collection. Opportunities to strengthen gender data frameworks can be important outcomes of gender-focused support to countries. In Mexico, several productive uses of gender-sensitive data were recommended, including to identify whether the creation of green jobs is benefiting men and women equally. In Chad's NDC 3.0, it was recommended that climate finance to implement future programming include a requirement for gender markers in line with international standards to better measure flows toward commitments.

CASE STUDY

Burkina Faso: Gender Analysis for Reviewing Gender Inclusion in Previous NDC

Burkina Faso's commitment to climate resilience and gender equality is outlined in national frameworks, including the NDC, National Development Plan, National Vision 2050, National Adaptation Plan (NAP), Long-Term Low Emission Development Strategy, and National Gender Strategy (2020-2024). GGGI provided technical support to conduct a comprehensive assessment with a GESI lens of the overall progress on climate action related to the implementation of the NDC 2.0. For each NDC action, the assessment evaluated (1) the level of reduction in vulnerability and improvement in livelihoods and (2) the differentiated benefits for women, particularly in terms of economic empowerment, training, and participation in decision-making. The assessment found that, overall, Burkina Faso's NDC projects do take the gender dimension into account—about 58% have focused on transformative gender approaches, which seek to challenge and transform

the social norms that perpetuate unequal gender relations and inequalities, and another 29% are partially gender sensitive. However, the assessment also found that the implementation of gender-sensitive climate change sectoral action plans is not yet fully effective. Particularly in adaptation projects and the agriculture sector, more work is needed to fully realize the potential of NDC actions to benefit women and girls. To strengthen the implementation of gender-responsive climate policies, GGGI developed gender-focused recommendations for inclusion in the NDC 3.0.

Through this gender-sensitive approach to learning from implementation and existing data, Burkina Faso strengthened the ambition and effectiveness of its NDC 3.0 and ensured that the benefits of aligned climate action will be equitably shared.



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Provide Capacity Building on Gender-Responsive Climate Action to Strengthen the Operationalization of Climate Frameworks

Public officials, from national leaders to local community organizations, benefit from deeper understanding of how gender dynamics shape climate vulnerability, access to resources, and the outcomes of planned interventions. Additionally, all sectors and levels of government benefit from training on how to incorporate these specific considerations into their particular domain.

Through the NDC Partnership, the majority of countries reflected in this brief received support for capacity building trainings on gender-transformative climate action. The country-requested trainings primarily targeted participants from ministries and departments of environment and gender, while a handful engaged sectoral colleagues in agriculture, forestry, water, energy, waste management, health, tourism, finance, and national planning. In the Pacific Region, GGGI, UN Women, and the NDC Partnership Support Unit convened a participatory workshop to strengthen the design and implementation of gender-responsive climate projects. Through a mix of expert-led presentations, case studies, and peer learning, the workshop promoted knowledge exchange, stronger institutional coordination, and better alignment of national priorities with funder expectations for government representatives from 13 Pacific countries. Participants also gained actionable insights into enhancing project bankability, engaging private sector players through blended finance opportunities, and leveraging policy and institutional levers to catalyze truly gender-transformative climate finance at both policy-design and project-readiness levels. The Ministry of Natural Resources,

Ecology and Technical Supervision in the Kyrgyz Republic was supported by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) to develop a practice-oriented training program on gender-responsive climate action and a targeted approach for priority sectors. The trainings were conducted in Russian and Kyrgyz to increase stakeholder access to the material and ensure participants had a strong foundation in the interlinkages between climate change and gender. In Ecuador, an embedded gender advisor developed capacity building opportunities to further institutional gender commitments across sectors, including guidelines for sustaining inclusive climate action over the long term.

In addition, subnational capacity building can be critical to ensure that national policies and plans translate into local, widespread action. For instance, in Zambia, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) supported district-level capacity building through a series of multisectoral training-of-trainers sessions (see box for more information). Kenya received support to translate the National Gender and Climate Change Action Plan from policy to practical guidance for 47 counties over multiple workshops. In Jordan, the Ministry of Environment facilitated workshops in three governorates that brought together women from rural communities. Participants worked together to develop locally relevant responses to climate risks affecting agriculture, with a focus on climate-smart practices and efficient water use. The workshops strengthened women's knowledge and gave them a role in shaping adaptation approaches for their communities.

Key shared outcomes of the distinct trainings included:

- capacity needs assessments conducted;
- guidelines developed on integrating gender dynamics into climate planning and programming;
- trainings developed and delivered on implementing gender-transformative climate action;
- post-training assessments conducted on changes in participants' knowledge and understanding.

In addition to strengthening government capacities for immediate action, these measures help to institutionalize gender-responsive climate action over the long term, strengthening country ownership. Moreover, mainstreaming capacity building by integrating gender and climate change modules into regular training programs for ministries and local government structures helps ensure it is sustained over time.

CASE STUDY

Zambia: District-Level Training-of-Trainers on Gender-Responsive Climate Action

In Zambia, a Gender-Based Climate Risk Assessment Training Manual was developed and a training-of-trainers series was conducted to strengthen local capacities for gender-responsive climate action. Between December 2025 and January 2026, several training workshops were conducted, with participants from seven districts, including women and men from key decision-making and technical roles at the district level. The participants covered a range of key NDC and NAP priority sectors, including agriculture, fisheries and livestock, energy, forestry, rural infrastructure, transport, industry, water, waste management, and health.

The trainings adopted a blended learning approach that combines theoretical presentations with group work, role plays, and field-based demonstrations. Emphasis was placed on participatory techniques that encourage peer learning, practical application of project assessment and design tools, and discussions drawing from local experiences and climate challenges. Using examples from the Zambian context, sectoral sessions illustrated how

women's disproportionate responsibility for water collection, food production, and caregiving increases their exposure to climate risks, while limited access to land, finance, and decision-making constrains their adaptive capacity. For instance, in the water sector, increased water scarcity and contamination from floods were examined in relation to women's and girls' unpaid care burden and health risks. Participants were also encouraged to find solutions, such as solar-powered boreholes and climate-smart agriculture practices.

The trainings emphasized the role of gender-based climate risk assessments in the government's deployment of community development funds and highlighted opportunities to further utilize these findings. Key outcomes of the trainings included strengthened alignment between district-level planning and national climate frameworks on gender-responsive climate action, improved project quality, and strengthened community ownership—contributing to more effective implementation of Zambia's NDC.

Design Targeted Gender-Responsive Climate Projects With Clear Budgets to Translate National Ambition Into Community-Based Action

Translating NDC commitments into implementable climate action in many countries requires dedicated support to design targeted interventions. The additional focus on gender-responsive outcomes often necessitates a collaborative approach to identify specific ministry actions, develop project pipelines, and adopt new gender-responsive budgeting approaches. Burkina Faso received support from GGGI to analyze implementation of its previous NDC and identify transformational gender actions to address remaining gaps. Actions identified to address gaps in implementation included the following.

- Rural electrification lighting projects should address gender concerns, and lighting designs should be conducive to income-generating activities for women.
- Agricultural projects should seek to improve women's access to land and secure land tenure.
- Projects investing in small- and medium-sized enterprises should promote access to affordable financial services for women and pro-poor social and economic inclusion, particularly for women-owned enterprises.

Additionally, Burkina Faso plans to adopt gender-sensitive budgeting to help ensure its gender-related climate commitments can be achieved.

Translating national ambition into community-level action includes identifying, designing, and financing targeted gender-responsive climate actions and bankable projects. For instance, in Rwanda, GESI considerations are in the process of being embedded into NDC implementation plans, priority sectoral strategies, and budgeting processes to help bridge the gap between policy commitments and practice. (see box for more information). Consultations in Mexico emphasized the importance of integrating gender considerations at the project design stage by engaging gender specialists to support the active participation of women in the design process, define clear project-level gender objectives, and establish gender-disaggregated data and results frameworks. In the Pacific, ministries of environment, gender, and finance came together to identify gender-transformative climate projects and financing needs.



CASE STUDY

Rwanda: Operationalizing the GESI Index and Simulation Tool

In Rwanda, the Rwanda Environment Management Authority, with support from GGGI, developed the GESI Index and Simulation Tool to identify gaps and opportunities for women, youth, and people with disabilities, while proposing national and global GESI indicators to promote equality.

The findings indicate that Rwanda has made notable progress in mainstreaming GESI into its climate-related strategies, particularly in the health and agriculture sectors, with moderate progress in energy and water sectors. Yet critical gaps persist across several sectors, including transport and mining, especially in workforce inclusion and infrastructure planning. A stakeholders' survey of 22 institutions revealed that while 86% of surveyed institutions report having GESI policies or strategies, implementation remains uneven across sectors. Key challenges include the limited availability of disaggregated data, insufficient institutional capacity, insufficient funding for GESI interventions, and persistent cultural and structural barriers that hinder the full participation of women.

For instance, although Rwanda's Climate and Nature Finance Strategy (2024–2030) outlines a comprehensive framework for mobilizing resources for low carbon and climate resilient development, the implementation of gender- and inclusion-responsive financing mechanisms is still in its early stages. It is estimated that only 10%–15% of tracked climate finance can currently be classified as gender responsive, and many projects do not incorporate gender-inclusive indicators, limiting the ability to assess whether financial flows benefit women and vulnerable groups equitably.

To address these challenges, participants emphasized the need for sustained capacity building, dedicated staffing, and budget allocation to effectively integrate GESI into institutional practices. To start, a project pipeline (consisting of 20 proposals with GESI components and indicators) and one fully developed project concept note have been prepared. The project concept focuses on scaling up affordable e-cooking in Kigali's school system.



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Engage Women as Decision-Makers and Project Implementers to Drive Community-Level Results

A smaller number of countries requested support to implement projects focused on livelihood development for gender-focused interventions. While envisioned within larger policy proposals, these projects required additional support to implement in targeted rural communities. The projects were highly attuned to local contexts and the practical needs of the communities involved. Supported activities also included trainings for rural women to support implementation, knowledge sharing, and the long-term sustainability of interventions. By supporting women as managers of primary resource management projects, governments and implementing partners are able to enhance the long-term sustainability of the practice despite facing increasing climate impacts.

In the Maldives, support was provided to engage women in a project that is revitalizing reed-based livelihoods as viable, climate resilient income sources. In particular, by involving Women's Development Committees, local councils, and youth groups in stewardship, monitoring, and decision-making, the project was able to support women as primary actors in reed cultivation, weaving, and wetlands restoration and management (see box for more information). In the Republic of the Marshall Islands, support was provided for the Women in Solar Project to integrate women-centered training, tools, and capacity support. The objective was to increase the capacity of women living on remote islands to install, operate, and maintain solar home systems. Rather than relying on classroom-style training, bringing trainings into homes not only grounded the learning in practical application but also led to greater ownership, stronger skills development, and better overall protection of the equipment.

CASE STUDY

Maldives: Project Implementation Support

The Government of the Maldives, through the Ministry of Tourism and Environment, delivered on gender-focused priorities in its NDC with the Gender-Responsive Nature-Based Solutions for Wetland Conservation and Climate Adaptation project. This project supports the NDC 3.0, which emphasizes gender-responsive, nature-based, and livelihood-enhancing interventions as critical measures for improving mental health and building climate resilience in the Maldives.

Specific objectives of this project include establishing an understanding of wetlands and associated nature-based livelihood opportunities, enhancing technical and climate resilient skills among women and youth through targeted training, supporting nature-based solutions, and generating knowledge and lessons to inform

national adaptation policies and future replication. In particular, the project supported:

- gender-responsive ecosystem, mental health, and livelihood assessments;
- design and delivery of community training on sustainable reed weaving and practitioner-led, hands-on reed nursery management practices;
- development of best practice guidelines for the establishment and management of community-led reed conservation nurseries;
- livelihood and mental health strengthening through participatory trainings on home gardening and mental health awareness;
- knowledge sharing of project results through technical workshops and dissemination of engaging media materials.



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Integrate GESI Into MRV to Strengthen Evidence-Based, Gender-Responsive Climate Action

To improve the targeting, effectiveness, and accountability of gender-responsive climate activities, support was provided in some countries to strengthen MRV systems for tracking gender-responsive outcomes and impacts. Technical assistance generated evidence for learning and informed adaptive management and decision-making, ensuring progress made on gender-responsive climate action continues to improve over time. Building on support for strengthening the use of gender-disaggregated data to inform decision-making and accountability, support for integrating GESI metrics into indicators within NDCs' MRV frameworks can ensure continuous tracking of progress toward equality and inclusion goals.



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Mexico, with support from GGGI, integrated gender and intersectionality perspectives into its first Biennial Transparency Report (BTR) and Seventh National Communication. These reports were submitted to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to fulfill Mexico's obligations under the Paris Agreement (see box for more information). In Burkina Faso, the need for follow-on support on integrating gender considerations into MRV systems and processes was identified as key for ensuring the effective implementation of the NDC and other related policies and plans, along with the adaptive management of projects supporting their implementation. An assessment conducted prior to district-level capacity building efforts in Kenya found that existing gender-inclusive data systems are inadequate and recommended that the government establish a centralized data platform to strengthen gender-inclusive planning and programming.

*Progress made on gender-responsive climate action **continues to improve over time**. Integrating GESI metrics into indicators within NDCs' MRV frameworks can ensure continuous tracking of progress toward equality and inclusion goals.*

CASE STUDY

Monitoring climate impacts on men and women

Mexico has established ambitious commitments, mechanisms, and goals, including mainstreaming gender, human rights, and intergenerational justice across its climate policies. In fulfillment of its obligations under Article 13 of the Paris Agreement, Mexico developed and submitted its first BTR to the UNFCCC, in which it reported on progress in implementing its climate policies, explicitly incorporating gender, human rights, and intersectional approaches. This positions Mexico among the few countries that have undertaken such efforts to ensure that equality, human rights, and intersectionality are articulated across the country's climate policy and reporting mechanisms. The process was led by the National Institute of Ecology and Climate Change (INECC) with support from GGGI.

The integration of the gender perspective into the BTR was carried out through a coordinated process between Mexico's Secretariat of Environment and Natural Resources and INECC. The main actions included:

- identifying good practices and recommendations to strengthen the integration of gender and human rights perspectives in mitigation, adaptation, cooperation, technology transfer, capacity building, and transparency;
- assessing gender-related knowledge and capacity building needs within INECC and preparing a report with practical recommendations for strengthening them, with a special focus on the Gender Equality Unit;
- identifying and analyzing the actions undertaken by various federal ministries of the Government of Mexico on gender, and their linkages to climate policy.

Findings from these analyses were then used to develop a specific gender annex for the BTR. This included 16 national initiatives considered to be good practices in gender and human rights in climate change mitigation and adaptation.



Photo by wosunan / Envato

SECTION 3

Recommendations to Further Strengthen Equitable and Inclusive Climate Action

Through a review of country experiences with gender equality technical assistance, this brief has identified best practices that strengthen the implementability and sustainability of gender-responsive and socially inclusive climate commitments. The core lessons are well understood, yet challenges remain to fully action them.

The recommendations below, aligned with key elements of the NDC Partnership's [Building Blocks for Effective Climate Action](#), include actionable steps that policymakers and practitioners can take to ensure the next five years of NDC implementation strengthen the foundations for a more just and equitable future for all.

Capacity Building

Plan and budget for ongoing capacity building and refresher trainings. Building on the capacity support provided for countries above, follow-on training is needed to both reinforce the learning of those already supported and to reach new officials and other stakeholders for the first time, particularly at the subnational level. In particular, training-of-trainers models can be scaled up to additional districts or counties to promote consistency in gender-responsive climate planning across the country. Investing in continuous capacity building can also help to sustain institutional memory and mitigate loss of expertise due to staff turnover.

Translate gender-inclusive climate knowledge and training materials. By translating materials into local and Indigenous languages, ensuring linguistic accuracy and policy relevance, future efforts can strengthen capacities for integrating gender considerations into local climate action and decision-making. Budgeting for and implementing this extra step can also increase stakeholders' access to internationally developed gender-climate knowledge and provide a robust foundation for further training sessions.

Localize capacity building tools. To support the facilitation of capacity building at the local level, gender and climate tools not only need to be translated into local languages, but also designed in different formats that, for instance, replace text-heavy guidelines with more images, practical examples, and brief checklists. Tailoring and adapting training to the intended stakeholders is essential for the success of each session and ensures that funds efficiently deliver the highest level of impact.

Capture qualitative learning. Moving beyond quantitative targets related to women beneficiaries and their participation in specific project activities, the elaboration of qualitative learning through success stories and case studies has proven to be an effective approach to inform project mid-term reviews and overall adaptive management. Allocating resources and time for partners to adapt evaluation tools to the participating communities is essential for capturing data that can be overlooked or difficult to extract without built trust.

Whole-of-Government and Coordination Mechanisms

Prioritize a multisectoral approach. In addition to mainstreaming gender considerations through climate-related policies, plans, and projects, multisectoral engagement is an important factor in fostering gender-responsive climate action across agriculture, water, energy, forestry, health, and other sectors. To support these various sectoral ministries and agencies at the local and national levels to enhance gender responsiveness and sustain efforts over the longer term, future support for capacity building will also need to extend to them.

Invest in coordination mechanisms. Structuring support around a coordination mechanism within government, such as an existing technical or multisectoral working group, can help improve the long-term sustainability of support efforts, particularly for interministerial projects. Existing coordination mechanisms that highlight gender equality or social inclusion across government may also need long-term support to sustain the gathering of members or renewed access to policy planning discussions.

Access to Finance

Improve understanding of gender impacts on financial allocations. Budgetary constraints continue to result in the de-prioritization or scale-down of gender- and climate-related activities or the reallocation of funding to support competing priorities like food security or emergency assistance, without targeted gender interventions. It is recommended to establish comprehensive gender-responsive budgeting mechanisms across all sectors to ensure funds are used for intended gender- and climate-specific interventions. Furthermore, additional support is needed to help facilitate access to credit and grants for women-led climate resilience initiatives.

Develop project pipelines. To enable timely and effective climate action at the local level, a pipeline of bankable projects ready to be implemented is needed. This involves designing projects with clear objectives and components focused on gender-responsive climate action, risk assessments and mitigation measures, and measurable outcomes. Capacity building for a wide range of project developers is needed to make these connections within implementation priorities.

Targeted Stakeholder Engagement

Design workshops to enable women's participation. Women in some communities may not be able to balance their desire to participate in workshops or consultations with their household responsibilities if the timings, locations, or structures are not suitable. When designing workshops and projects that aim to involve women, measures such as flexible schedules, temporary care support, and longer timelines for consultative program development need to be integrated as necessary elements, not just treated as ad hoc accommodations.

Engage men to reinforce, not dilute, women's leadership. Short, focused consultative training sessions for men can help them understand the importance of climate action targeted to support women and girls and recognize women's roles as change agents. In the case of project implementation, this can also help align the whole household behind specific interventions.

Planning and Program Design

Establish longer planning timelines. To both strengthen engagement with implementing partners and consultations with women under future initiatives on gender-responsive climate action, allocating sufficient time for the planning phase is critical. While rapid support can be helpful in some cases, taking 8–12 months to set up and get community or local government buy-in on more robust sets of activities with countries and partners can significantly enhance the long-term sustainability of such efforts.

Strengthen monitoring, evaluation, and learning systems. Gender indicators are often only assessed at project closure rather than throughout implementation. To improve the targeting, effectiveness, and accountability of gender-responsive climate activities, monitoring, evaluation, and learning systems for tracking gender-responsive outcomes and impacts should be strengthened. This can also help to generate evidence for learning and inform adaptive management and decision-making. In particular, by integrating sex-disaggregated data into NDC and NAP targets, countries can ensure progress made on gender-responsive climate action continues to improve over time, building on continuous learning loops that integrate lessons into annual policy and budget reviews.



SECTION 4

Conclusion

The best practices and recommendations presented above reflect hard-won insights from countries that have embedded gender equality and social inclusion as core dimensions of climate governance. The NDC Partnership stands ready to support

countries in putting these practices into action—connecting country needs with the technical expertise, peer learning, and partnership coordination required to build the foundations for climate action that is ambitious, accountable, and equitable for all.



Advancing Gender-Responsive Climate Action

BEST PRACTICE BRIEF

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At the bottom of the page, there are three overlapping geometric shapes: a blue parallelogram on the left, a yellow parallelogram in the middle, and a green parallelogram on the right. To the far right, a large dark blue triangle points upwards from the bottom edge.