

INSIGHT BRIEF

NDC Partnership Trends in Country Priorities and Partner Support

NOVEMBER 2026

NDC PARTNERSHIP

Contents

Acronyms 3

Introduction 4

Overview of Country Requests and Partner Support 5

Requests and Support by Sector 8

Requests and Support by Focus Area 11

Requests and Support by Building Blocks for Effective Climate Action 12

Requests and Support by Activity Type 14

Conclusion 15

About Insight Briefs

Insight briefs are analyses developed by the NDC Partnership Support Unit, members, or partners to share insights into thematic issues based on requests received by countries and the support provided through the NDC Partnership.

Acronyms

AOSIS	Alliance of Small Island States
CAEP	Climate Action Enhancement Package
FOLU	Forestry and Other Land Use
LDCs	Least Developed Countries
LT-LEDS	Long-Term Low Emissions Development Strategy
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MRV	Measurement, Reporting and Verification
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
ODA	Official Development Assistance
RSLs	Request for Support Letters
SIDS	Small Island Developing States

Introduction

The NDC Partnership is a global coalition advancing the Paris Agreement by strengthening capacity and collaboration for country-owned climate and development action. Bringing together more than 270 countries and institutions, it aligns support behind country priorities, builds shared knowledge, and generates evidence to inform stronger climate action that drives sustainable development.

This brief[1] presents trends in country requests for support across the NDC Partnership from 2017 through mid-2026, providing a clear picture of countries' support needs and patterns in partner responses leading up to COP31. Trends are broken down by region, topic, sector, focus area, activity type, the Building Blocks for Effective Climate Action, and support rate over time.[2]



*Further details on country requests and partner support across the 10 priorities under the **COP31 Action Agenda** can be found in the complementary paper, NDC Partnership Trends in Country Needs and Partner Support Across the COP31 Presidency Action Agenda.*

Read the paper

1 This brief was developed by the NDC Partnership Support Unit to inform discussions on emerging country priorities and partner support for countries as they implement their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).

2 Data is drawn from the NDC Partnership's knowledge management system, **kNook**, which consolidates countries' requests for support submitted to the NDC Partnership as well as implementing and development partners' responses to country requests. Each request is tagged by a series of categories, including country, region, sector, focus area, the Building Blocks for Effective Climate Action, key topic, activity type, and more. The methodology used aligns with the kNook taxonomy, and reflects the data in kNook as of 16 September 2026.



Overview of Country Requests and Partner Support

Since 2017, 109 countries have submitted a total of 2,637 requests through request for support letters (RSLs) to the NDC Partnership.[3]

Overall, 86% of these requests for support are fully or partially supported. As shown in Figure 2, the support rate has declined over time. However, it is important to recognize that the support rate is not a static statistic. Specifically, country priorities change over time, meaning previously requested support may no longer be needed, and it takes time for partners to mobilize support. As a result, historic requests for support are periodically removed from the data and partner support is constantly added across previous years.[4] These dynamics explain the fact that all requests circulated between 2017 and 2021 are shown as supported and underscore the importance of the NDC Partnership's role in helping countries and partners continuously align support.[5]

Figure 1

Average Support Rate Across All Requests for Support

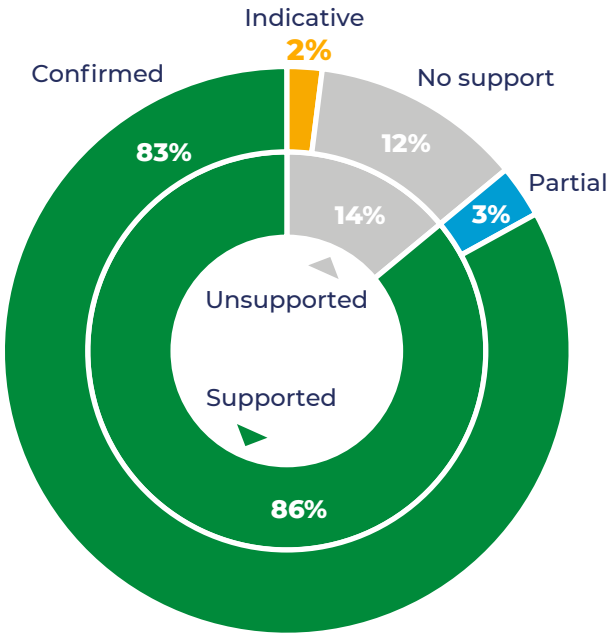
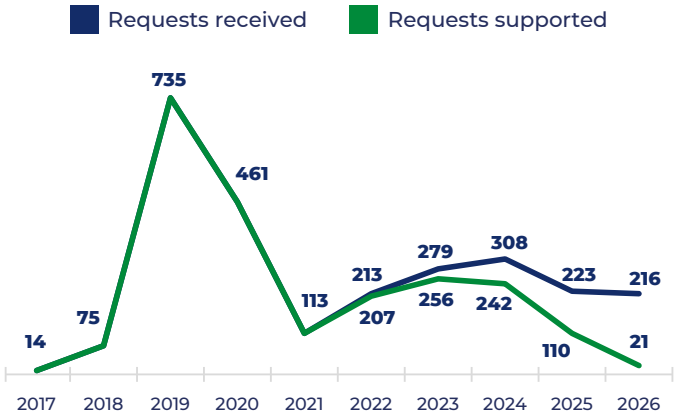


Figure 2

Number of Requests Circulated and Supported, by Year Circulated to Partners



3 This analysis is based on RSLs submitted by developing countries through the NDC Partnership. Numbers differ from previous analyses shared by the Support Unit, which also included data drawn from NDC implementation plans. This smaller dataset, used here, represents a more accurate representation of countries' immediate priorities and partner support.

4 Unsupported requests in kNook are audited annually. Requests are archived (excluded from the system and from future analysis) when governments confirm that the previously unmet need is no longer a priority.

5 The spike in requests circulated in 2019 and 2020 reflect countries' requests through the Climate Action Enhancement Package (CAEP), which provided countries with rapid and dedicated support to enhance the quality, process and ambition of their NDCs in 2020. The remaining unsupported CAEP requests were archived from kNook in 2023 as these were no longer reflective of countries' active needs, contributing to the 100% support rate in these years. Unsupported requests through the Global Call for NDCs 3.0 & LT-LEDS, circulated between 2023 and 2025, remain in kNook since partner support is still being committed against these requests.

The NDC Partnership's geographical footprint extends across every region of the globe. **Sub-Saharan Africa** has the **most countries requesting support** (41); it is also the region with the **largest gap in support** (17% of requests are unsupported). This is driven by large numbers of unsupported requests from across countries, including Chad, Benin, Mauritania, and Tanzania.

Upper-middle-income and lower-middle-income countries have historically been most engaged through the NDC Partnership. However, **engagement from low-income countries is growing**, with the number of these countries requesting support in mid-2026 (15 countries) already exceeding the total number in 2025 (9 countries).

Requests from Least Developed Countries (LDCs) have the largest support gap across all country groupings, with 20% of requests from these countries unsupported. At the same time, engagement from LDCs is growing. Nearly one-third of countries requesting support through the NDC Partnership are LDCs (33 countries), and 24 requested support by mid-2026 alone compared to 17 in 2025.

Figure 3

Number of Countries Requesting Support by Region

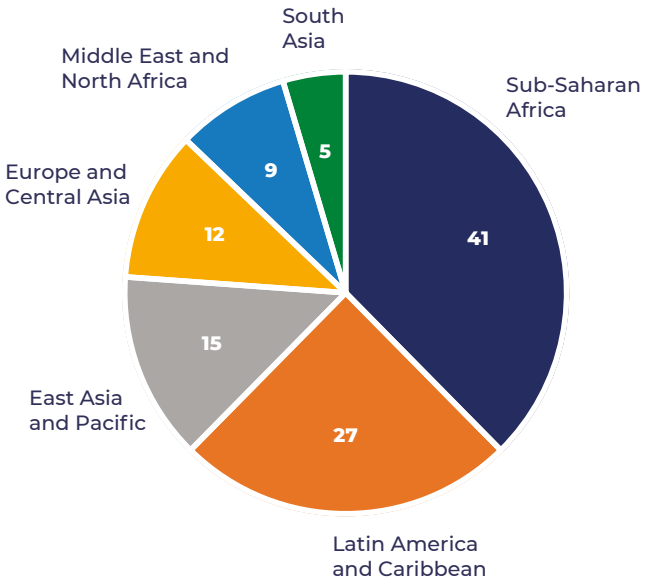
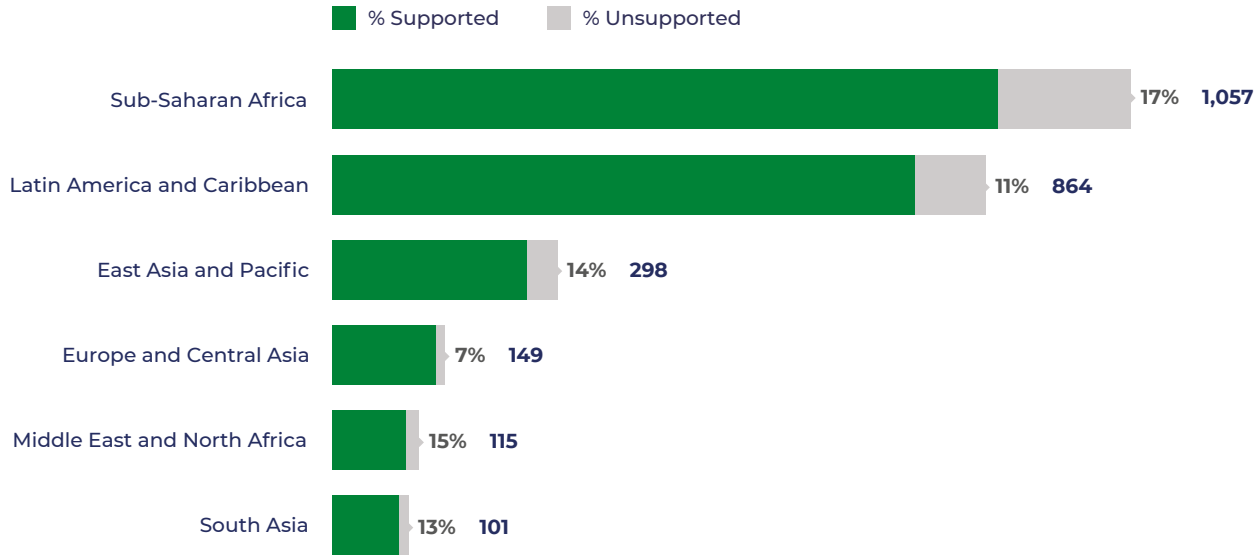


Figure 4

Number of Requests by Region and Support Status

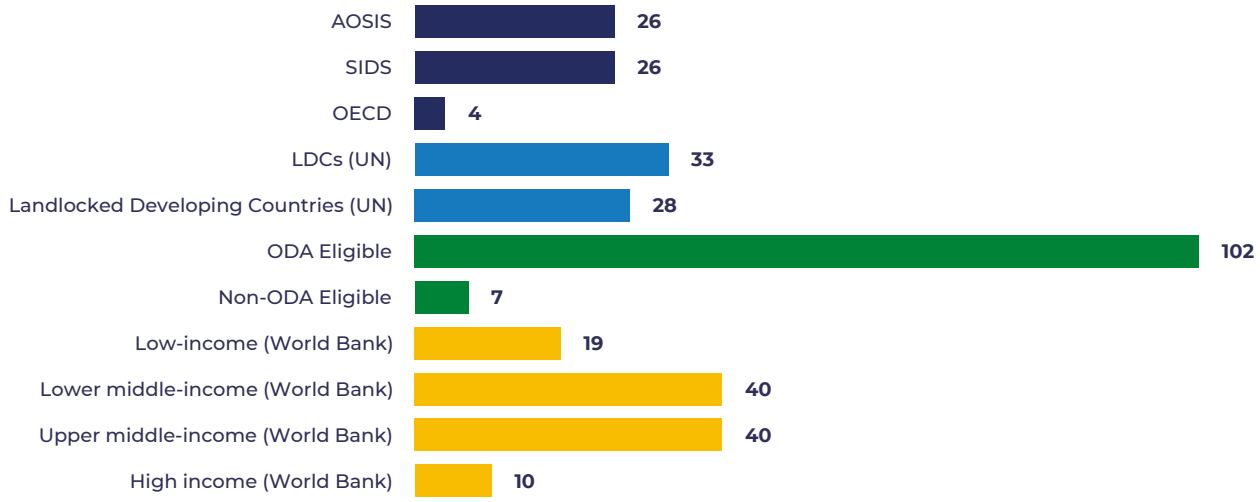


Nearly all countries requesting support through the NDC Partnership are eligible for Official Development Assistance (ODA; 94%), while 6% are non-ODA eligible. **Non-ODA eligible countries have a larger support gap (17% unsupported) compared to ODA-eligible countries (13% unsupported).**[6]

6 The seven non-ODA eligible countries that requested support through the NDC Partnership are: Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Chile, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Seychelles, Trinidad and Tobago, and Uruguay.

Figure 5

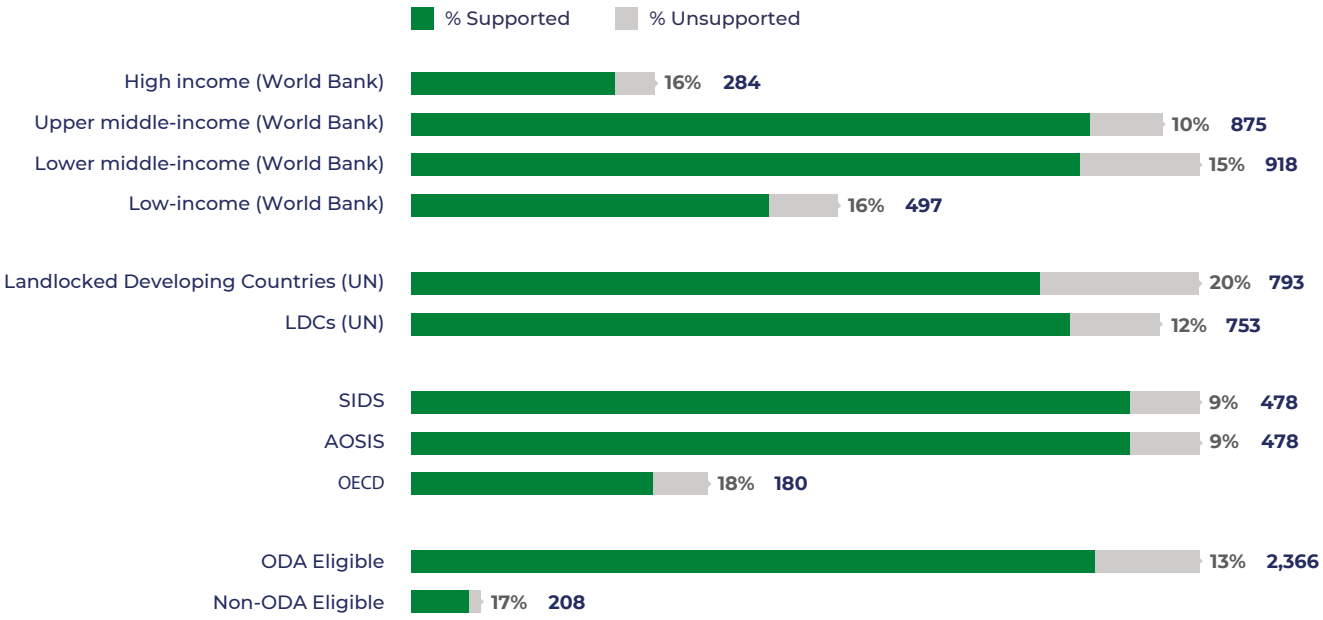
Number of Countries with Requests for Support by Country Grouping



Note. AOSIS = Alliance of Small Island States; SIDS = Small Island Developing States; OECD = Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

Figure 6

Number of Requests by Country Grouping and Support Status



Requests and Support by Sector

Many requests for support circulated through the NDC Partnership (63%) do not specify a sector. They cover, for instance, the creation or updating of national measurement, reporting, and verification (MRV) systems or the development of national policies, strategies, or plans for NDC implementation and investment.

Figure 7 shows that **the number of countries requesting non-sectoral support has decreased sharply in recent years**, after spiking in 2023 and 2024 due to broad requests for NDC 3.0 and Long-Term Low Emissions Development Strategy (LT-LEDS) development. At the same time, the number of **countries requesting sector-specific support has grown in recent years**, exceeding 2024 levels across every sector in 2025. This increase is driven by countries' increased focus on implementation. After prioritizing NDC development and planning in recent years, countries are shifting to sectoral approaches at a scale that was not seen after the previous two NDC submissions. Of the requests that are sector-specific, the most common sectors are **energy (94 countries), agriculture (82 countries), and forestry and other land use (FOLU; 75 countries).** A full breakdown across sectors and years is found in Figure 7. [7]

Energy has consistently been the most common sector reflected in countries' requests, with the number of countries seeking energy-focused support increasing steadily over time and on track to peak by the end of 2026 following the Transitioning Away from Fossil Fuels Roadmap launched at COP30.

FOLU has also consistently been one of the most common sectors, with the number of countries seeking support nearly tripling (from 9 to 25 countries) between 2023 and 2024. Demand for forestry-focused support has continued in the lead-up to COP31, following the launch of the Tropical Forest Forever Facility at COP30.

The number of countries expressing **water** sector needs also increased sharply, more than tripling between 2023 and 2024 (from 8 to 25). This follows financial support committed through the NDC Partnership in March 2023, targeting technical assistance to countries to enhance the integration of water in NDC implementation and enhancement.[8] Demand for support in this sector has remained high leading up to COP31, following an additional commitment of water-focused funding through the NDC Partnership at COP30.[9] This suggests that when dedicated funding is made available through the NDC Partnership, countries respond by bringing forward related needs, reinforcing the role of targeted funding in surfacing support needs.

7 An individual request for support can cover more than one sector.

8 See The NDC Partnership Supports Countries to Leverage Opportunities Across the Water-Climate Nexus.

9 See Netherlands Announces EUR 10 Million Contribution to Support Countries Addressing Water Challenges.

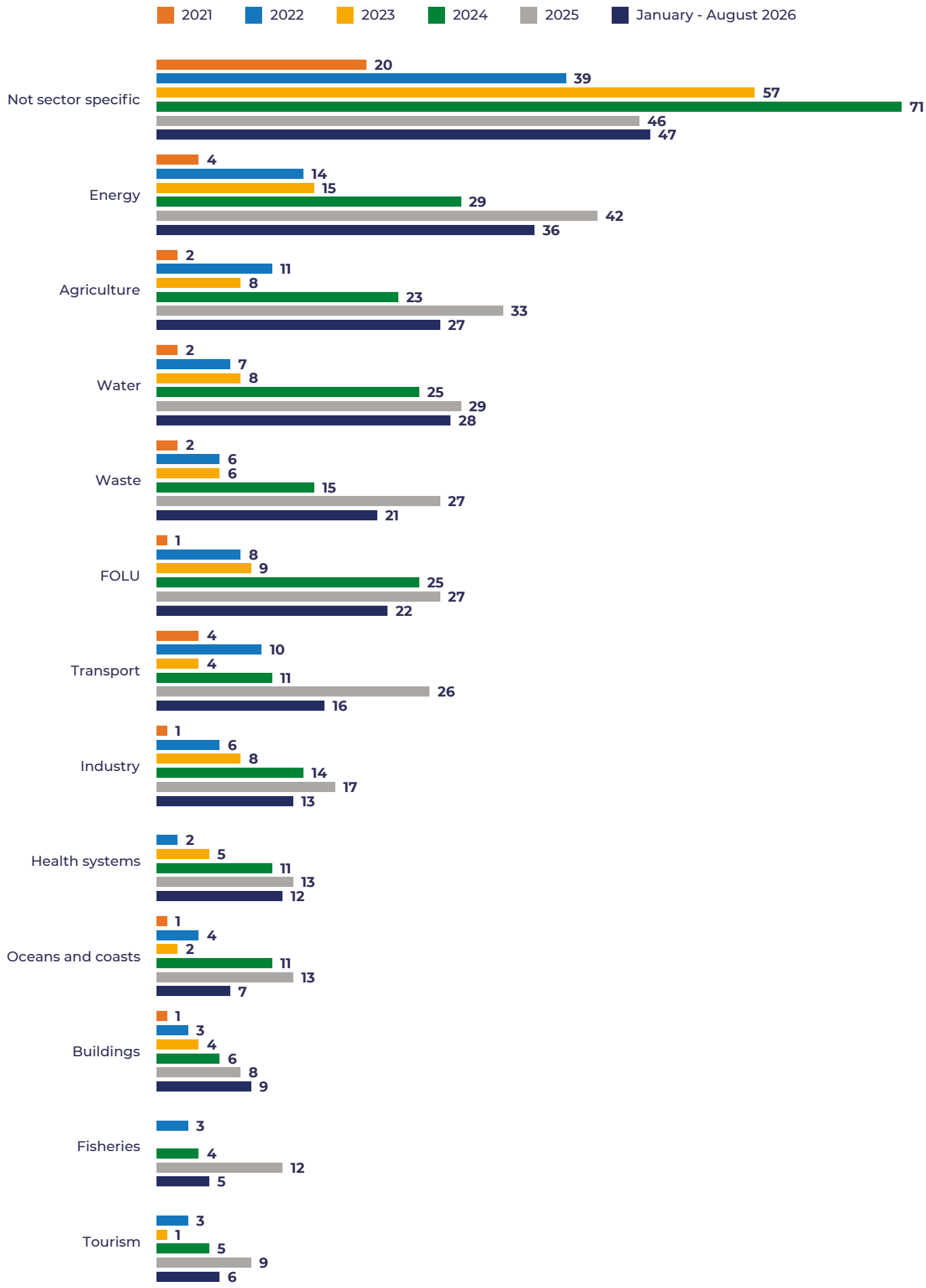


Photo by Johan / Adobe Stock

*Energy has consistently been **the most common sector** reflected in countries' requests.*

Figure 7

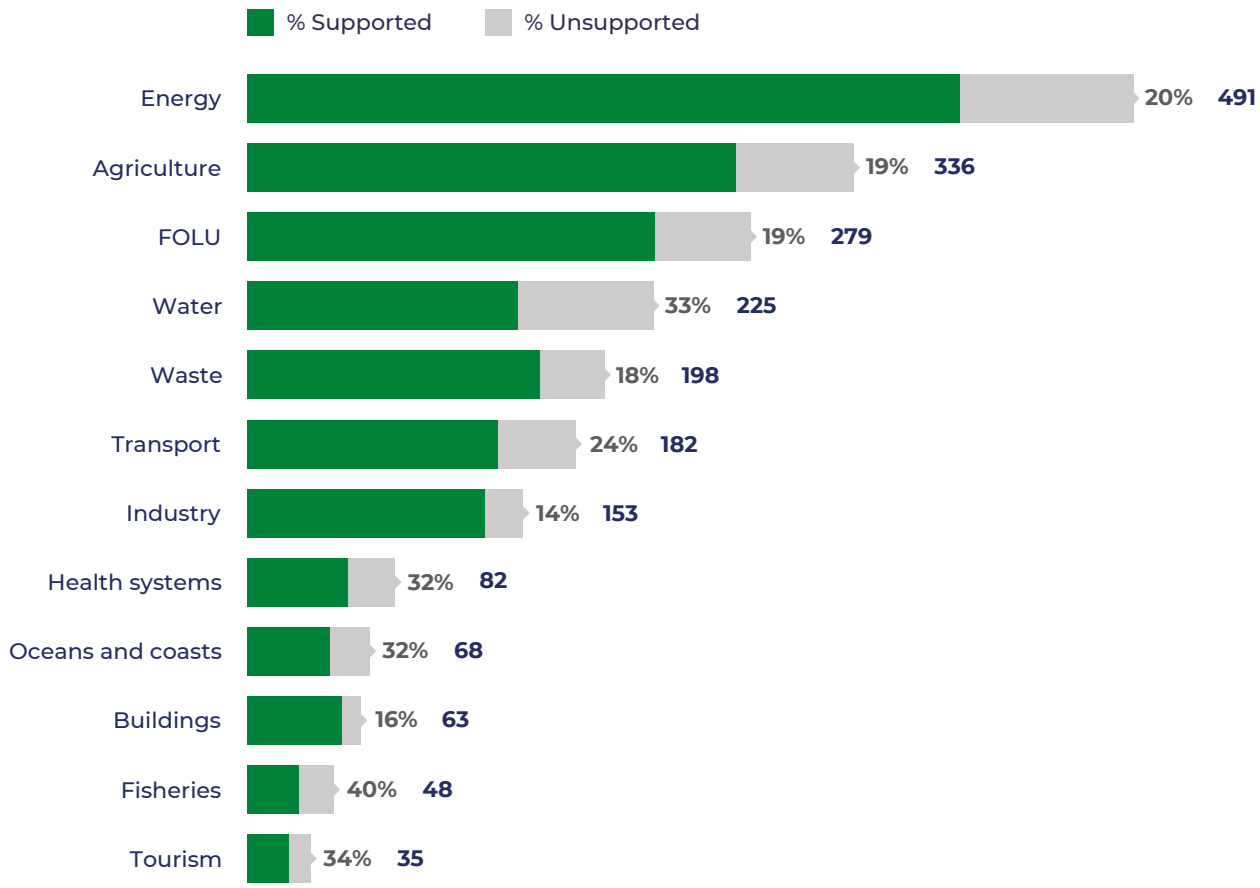
Number of Countries Requesting Support by Sector and Year Circulated



The three sectors with the most requests—energy, agriculture, and FOLU—also attract high levels of support. However, additional support is needed across all sectors. Significant **gaps in support exist in the water sector** (33% unsupported), driven mainly by lack of support to develop bankable projects and pipelines, develop capacity, and engage stakeholders. Significant support gaps also exist in less common sectors such as **fisheries** (40% unsupported), **tourism** (34% unsupported), **health systems** (32% unsupported), and **oceans and coasts** (32% unsupported).

Figure 8

Number of Requests for Support by Sector and Support Status



Requests and Support by Focus Area

Nearly all countries (98%) have requested crosscutting support, covering aspects of both mitigation and adaptation. More countries have requested mitigation-focused support (85 countries) than adaptation-focused support (74 countries).

While adaptation-specific requests are less common than mitigation, demand is growing over time. This growth in adaptation demand reflects increased focus on topics such as just transition and Rio Conventions Synergies.

Adaptation requests have the largest support gap across focus areas (21% unsupported), with most support directed toward crosscutting requests (12% unsupported). The support gap for adaptation requests is driven by a lack of support specifically in the water and agriculture sectors as well as for requests related to developing studies and analyses and capacity development focused on adaptation. This trend highlights an opportunity for partners to further align technical assistance and funding with rising adaptation demand. Bridging this gap is critical to ensuring countries can translate adaptation priorities into concrete resilience-building actions.

Figure 9

Number of Countries with Requests for Support by Focus Area and Year Circulated

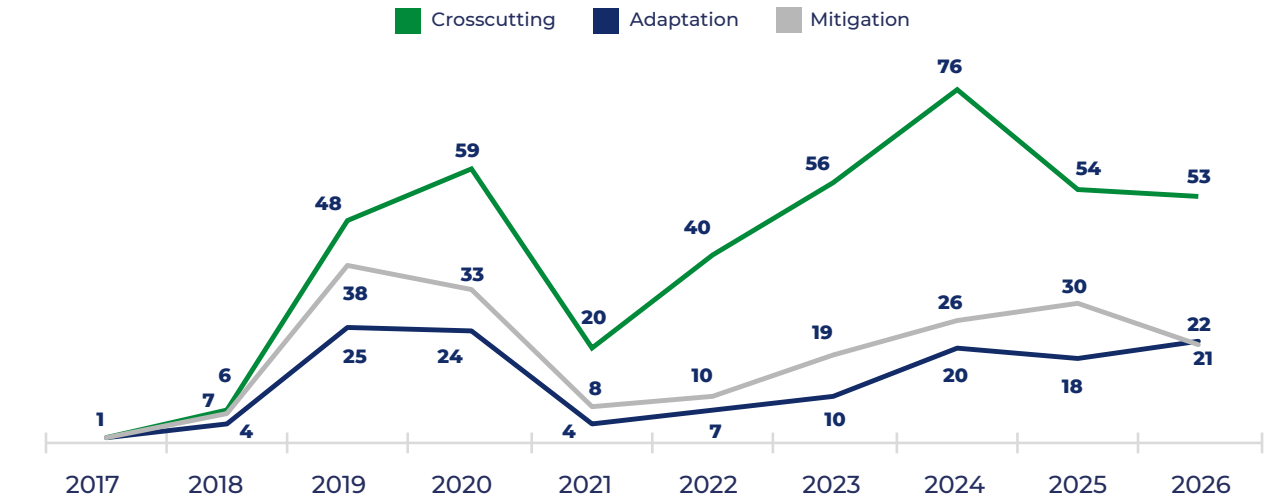
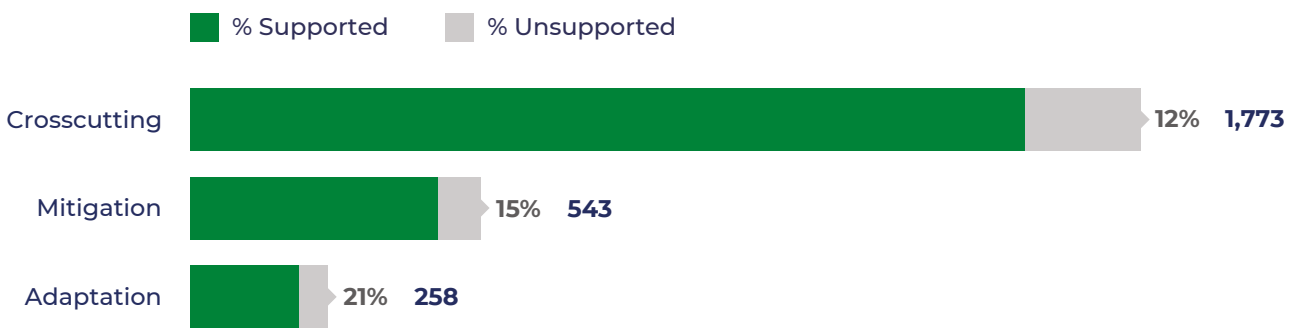


Figure 10

Number of Requests for Support by Focus Area and Support Status



Requests and Support by Building Blocks for Effective Climate Action

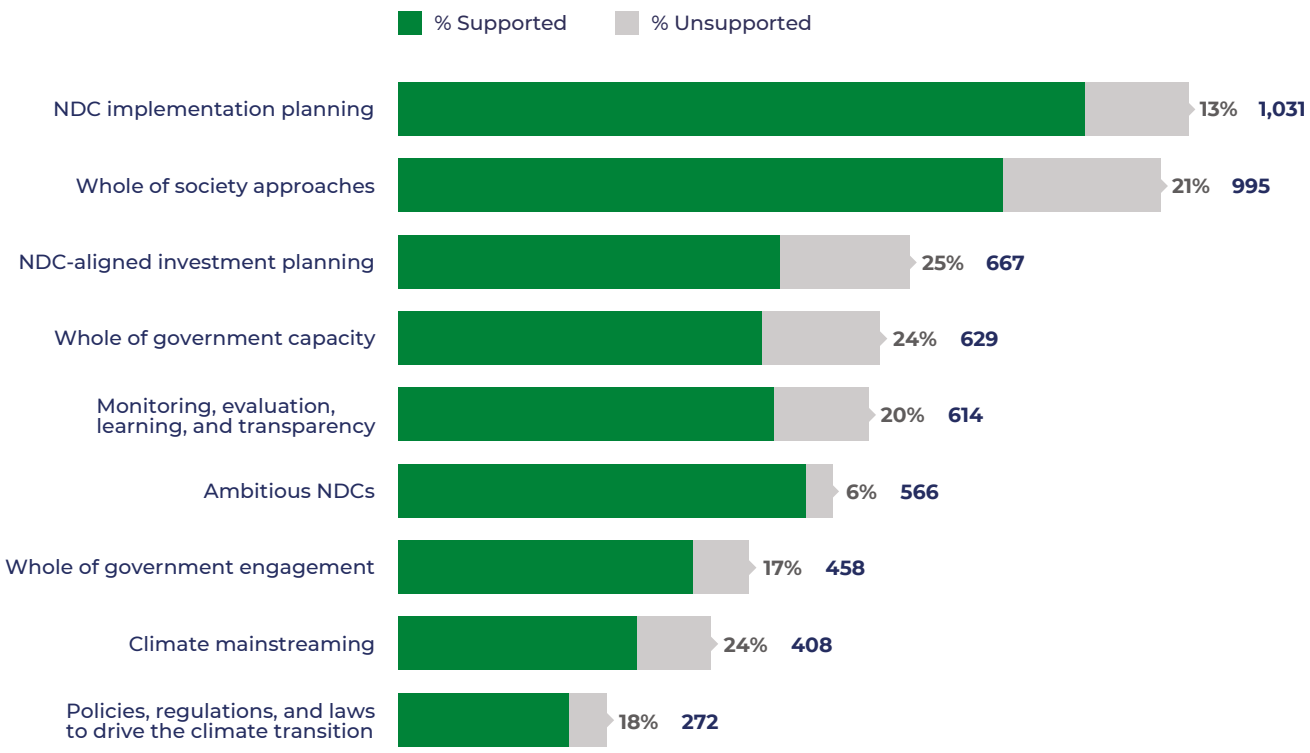
The Building Blocks for Effective Climate Action reflect the enablers of success that support ambitious climate action at the country level.[10] **The most common** building blocks that countries are strengthening through the NDC Partnership are **NDC implementation planning** (106 countries), **whole-of-society approaches** (103 countries), and **NDC-aligned investment planning** (101 countries).

10 Learn more about the Building Blocks for Effective Climate Action in the NDC Partnership 2026–2030 Work Program.

Requests to develop ambitious NDCs have attracted the most support due to targeted efforts through the NDC Partnership's Climate Action Enhancement Package (CAEP) and the Global Call for NDCs 3.0 & LT-LEDS. A significant amount of support has also been committed to requests for NDC implementation planning, whole-of-society approaches, whole-of-government engagement, and policies, regulations, and laws. However, the **largest gaps in support are found in requests for NDC-aligned investment planning, whole-of-government capacity, and climate mainstreaming**. Strengthening support in areas where demand continues to outpace supply will be key to enabling effective and sustained climate action.

Figure 11

Number of Requests by Building Blocks for Effective Climate Action and Support Status



As countries move from planning to implementation, demand is increasingly concentrated on the capacity and investment required to turn ambition into action. While requests aligned with the "ambitious NDCs" building block peaked in 2024 as countries prepared NDCs 3.0 submissions, **in the lead-up to COP31, countries' needs have shifted towards delivering on their increased ambition**. The number of countries requesting support for **whole-of-government capacity has nearly doubled since 2022**, while demand for **NDC-aligned investment planning** has risen and remains high. Demand in other areas continues to grow alongside increased capacity, with countries requesting support across an average of six building blocks in 2025, up from four in 2021.

Yet there is no single route for how countries progress through these building blocks. Looking at how countries' requests have evolved over time, the order in which needs emerge varies widely from one country to the next. **One consistent pattern is that requests for the NDC-aligned investment planning building block and related support tend to follow the NDC implementation planning building block**. Of the 99 countries that requested support for both building blocks, 59 countries tended to request implementation planning support before investment planning support, more than twice as many as those that tended to request support in the reverse order (25 countries).[11]

Another pattern is the consistency of countries' requests to engage the whole of society and to strengthen government capacity, regardless of where countries are in the enhancement and implementation cycle. Countries return to these building blocks repeatedly, with the whole-of-society approaches and whole-of-government capacity building blocks featuring in 79% and 66% of the years in which countries requested support, respectively, compared to 36–53% for other building blocks (apart from NDC implementation planning and NDC-aligned investment planning).

While countries follow their own pathways shaped by national context and the NDC cycle, they are moving in the same direction: from planning towards investment and delivery, which calls for support that is sustained and flexible.



*As countries move from planning to implementation, **demand is increasingly concentrated on the capacity and investment** required to turn ambition into action.*

11 For each country, every implementation planning request was compared with every investment planning request by the date that the RSL was received to identify trends in which was most commonly requested first by each country. Of the remaining 15 countries, 12 requested both types of support only on the same dates, and three showed no clear trend in the order in which they requested this support. Ten countries that only requested either investment or implementation planning support, not both, are excluded from this calculation.

Requests and Support by Activity Type

The most common activity types among countries requesting support are developing studies and analyses (107 countries), developing capacity (105 countries), engaging stakeholders (104 countries), and developing or updating MRV or monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems and collecting data (103 countries).

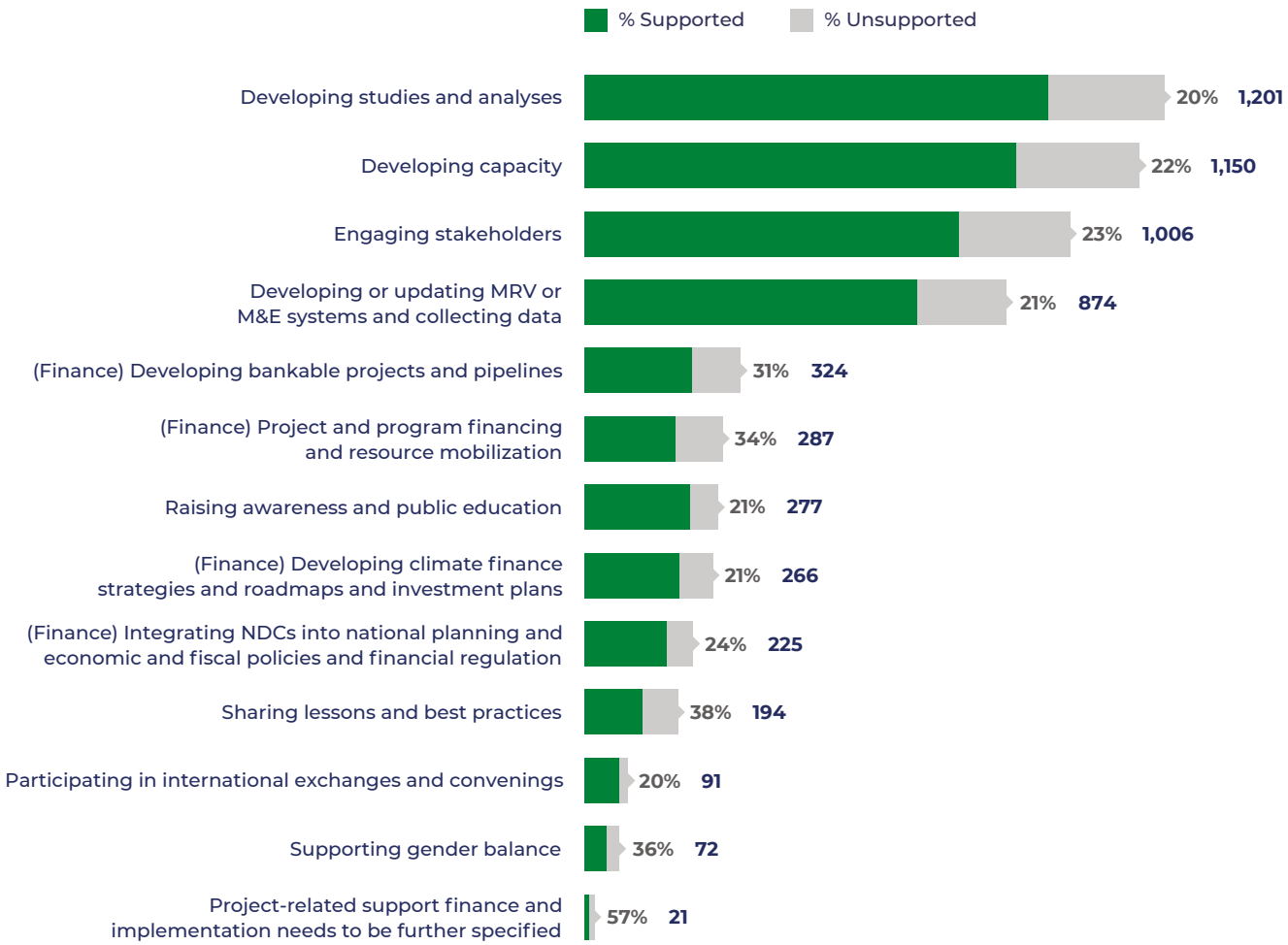
Partner support is mostly concentrated in the four most common activity types (see Figure 12), though further support is still needed. The largest gaps in support lie in requests focused on sharing lessons and best practices (38% unsupported) and supporting gender balance (36% unsupported).

Finance-specific activity types also have significant gaps in support, particularly requests to develop bankable projects and pipelines (31% unsupported) and project and program financing and resource mobilization (34% unsupported).[12] Bridging these gaps, particularly in project development, financing, and knowledge exchange, will be key to enabling countries to move from ambition to delivery.

12 Further details on trends in finance-related requests and support through the NDC Partnership are presented in the thematic deep dive paper, NDC Partnership Trends in Country Needs and Partner Support Across the COP31 Presidency Action Agenda.

Figure 12

Number of Requests by Activity Type and Support Status



Conclusion

As countries shift from NDC enhancement towards implementation, demand for support is increasingly concentrated in areas that enable effective implementation, including planning, financing and investment, capacity development, and whole-of-society engagement. The NDC Partnership continues to mobilize substantial support for these and other areas, in line with countries' evolving needs. While the overall support rate remains high, gaps persist, particularly in adaptation, sector-specific needs, and finance-related activities.

These trends provide an evidence base for partners seeking to target support where countries' unmet needs are greatest. As countries plan for and implement increasingly ambitious climate commitments, continued efforts to align partner support with these priorities are critical in accelerating delivery and maximizing impact.



NDC Partnership Trends in Country Priorities and Partner Support

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