



Supporting Gender-Responsive NDCs: Gender Integration in NDC Partnership Member Countries

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Insight Brief

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Insight Briefs are informal analyses developed by the NDC Partnership's Support Unit, members or its partner institutions to share insights into thematic issues corresponding to country requests to the Partnership for support. The following Insight Brief, developed by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), based on their analysis of updated Nationally Determined Contributions, or NDCs, submitted in 2020/2021, examines gender equality considerations and provides recommendations on how gender-responsive climate action goals within NDCs can be strengthened as countries implement their plans. A related brief on gender considerations will follow and will offer insights into the nature and impact of support provided by the Partnership.

KEY FINDINGS

Countries are increasingly aware of the importance of integrating gender equality considerations into their actions to define and meet NDC targets. The NDC Partnership developed a Gender Strategy and companion Practical Guide to support members in their efforts to plan and implement gender-responsive climate action. All members follow the Strategy, mainstreaming gender equality considerations throughout the Country Engagement Process. In addition, the NDC Partnership provides support to its country members to integrate gender equality in their climate action planning and updated NDCs. This brief explores trends in the latest round of NDC updates, analyzed by International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), and showcases examples of gender-responsive planning in NDC Partnership member countries. The analysis examines updated NDCs submitted by September 1, 2021, covering 57 of the 115 NDC Partnership member countries¹, and has been developed as a collaboration with the IUCN, drawing on its 2021 Environment and Gender Information (EGI)² report on gender in the revised NDCs.³

Key findings include:

- 53 of the 57 (93%) analyzed Partnership member NDC texts included mention of gender considerations and/or women in their revised NDC, of which, 24 of the NDC texts added gender considerations where they had not in their previous NDCs.
- 53 of the analyzed NDCs were submitted by developing countries and 4 were submitted by developed countries.
- Almost half (47%) of the NDCs of Partnership members that were analyzed included mentions of gender in their adaptation sections, 25% included gender in their mitigation sections and 21% included gender in both sections.
- Mention of gender considerations in specific sectors is varied, with more countries including gender considerations in their agriculture sections (25), followed by energy (17), health (16), water (16), and forests (16).
- NDC Partnership member countries included several gender responsive components in their updated NDCs, with countries showing strong consideration for:
 - The inclusion of gender stakeholders in NDC development
 - Inclusion of both gender objectives and activities

¹ A full list of NDC Partnership member countries can be found on the Partnership's [Members & Membership page](#). Data used in this analysis describes membership on Sept. 1, 2021. Four of the 57 analyzed NDCs were submitted by developed countries, including the updated European Union NDC which submitted on behalf of all member states. NDC content and text can be found on the [NDC Content page](#).

² IUCN's EGI methodology is a mixed-methods approach consisting of a quantitative and qualitative content analysis, which is used to assess the incorporation of gender equality and women's empowerment considerations in environment documents (e.g., policies, plans, frameworks, etc.). The EGI methodology is designed to adapt to the different needs of the documents, and it was adapted for the review of the NDCs in 2021. The 2021 report includes the 89 revised/updated NDCs submitted between Jan. 1, 2020, and Sept. 1, 2021. The 27 EU Member Countries are counted as one submission.

³ "Gender and National Climate Planning: Gender Integration in the Revised Nationally Determined Contributions;" IUCN; 2021; <https://genderandenvironment.org/gender-and-ndcs-2021/>.

- Use of gender indicators
- Key areas of improvement include strengthening use of gender analysis, inclusion of sex-disaggregated and gender indicators, gender-responsive budgeting, and inclusion of gender stakeholders in the implementation of actions.

The increased inclusion of gender in NDC Partnership member countries' NDCs, particularly in comparison with IUCN's 2016 INDC data, suggests that countries are moving toward greater alignment with Parties' commitments to gender equality, as outlined in the Paris Agreement, its rulebook as well as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, or UNFCCC, Enhanced Lima Work Programme on Gender and its Gender Action Plan.

INTRODUCTION

Parties to the UNFCCC have increasingly recognized the importance of “gender equality and the effective participation of women” for effective action on all aspects of climate change.⁴ The importance of advancing gender equality in national-level climate action is emphasized further through the 2015 Paris Agreement and its Rulebook, or implementation guidelines, which state that NDC planning processes should occur in a gender-responsive manner.⁵ Recently, the adoption of the Enhanced Lima Work Programme on Gender and Its Gender Action Plan was designed to help drive gender-responsive implementation of UNFCCC mandates and the Paris Agreement, which can enable parties to raise their climate ambitions and simultaneously ensure a just transition of the workforce and enhance gender equality accordingly with their development priorities.⁶

Within this context, the NDC Partnership adopted its Gender Strategy in 2019 to advance gender equality considerations in member countries' NDCs and climate action plans.⁷ To support countries in their integration of gender equality into NDC planning and implementation, the NDC Partnership provides, among other support, targeted assistance through the country engagement process.⁸ Under this process, countries are provided with basic guidance on a set of key recommended steps for establishing, operationalizing and monitoring activities at the country level.⁹ While countries decide which steps to adopt — based on their relevance to the specific context — in each stage of the country engagement process, the NDC Partnership requires that communication be inclusive and open to all relevant stakeholders.¹⁰ Through the Climate Action Enhancement Package (CAEP), the NDC Partnership delivered targeted, fast-tracked support to countries to enhance the quality, increase the ambition, and implement NDCs as part of the update process. A number of the analyzed NDCs in this brief were supported with technical expertise and capacity building offered through the CAEP throughout the submission process.¹¹

⁴ “The Cancun Agreements: Outcome of the Work of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-Term Cooperative Action;” UNFCCC; March 15, 2011; <https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2010/cop16/eng/07a01.pdf#page=4>.

⁵ “Information to Facilitate Clarity, Transparency and Understanding of Nationally Determined Contributions, Referred to in Decision 1/CP.21, Paragraph 28;” UNFCCC; March 19, 2019; https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/cma2018_3_add1_advance.pdf#page=3.

⁶ “Enhanced Lima Work Programme on Gender and Its Gender Action Plan;” UNFCCC; March 16, 2020; https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/cp2019_13a01E.pdf.

⁷ “NDC Partnership Gender Strategy;” NDC Partnership; September 2019; <https://ndcpartnership.org/sites/default/files/NDC%20Partnership%20Gender%20Strategy%202019.pdf>.

⁸ “Country Engagement Strategy: A Country-Driven Approach for Collective Impact on Climate and Development Action;” NDC Partnership; October 2017; https://ndcpartnership.org/sites/all/themes/ndcp_v2/docs/country-engagement/NDCP_CountryEngStrategy_Final.pdf.

⁹ “NDC Partnership Gender Strategy;” NDC Partnership; September 2019; <https://ndcpartnership.org/sites/default/files/NDC%20Partnership%20Gender%20Strategy%202019.pdf>.

¹⁰ “NDC Partnership Gender Strategy;” NDC Partnership; September 2019. <https://ndcpartnership.org/sites/default/files/NDC%20Partnership%20Gender%20Strategy%202019.pdf>.

¹¹ More information on the CAEP structure and results can be found on the NDC Partnership's [Climate Action Enhancement Package page](#).

In addition to guidance on integrating gender considerations within NDC planning and implementation, the NDC Partnership mobilizes support based on country requests to address gaps in support for the implementation of member NDCs. Additional insights on the nature and impact of gender equality support recently provided by the Partnership will be addressed in a forthcoming brief.

PROGRESS INTEGRATING GENDER CONSIDERATIONS

In September 2021, the NDC Partnership had 115 country members, 57 of which had submitted updated NDCs to the UNFCCC (51% of the 115 members). For the purposes of this analysis, data include the 57 revised/updated NDCs submitted between 1 January 2020 and 1 September 2021. Within the 57 analyzed NDCs, 53 were submitted by developing country members and 4 were submitted by developed country members of the Partnership. Available data reference gender inclusion in 2016 INDC submissions as well.¹²

43% of reviewed member NDCs specifically mentioned including women stakeholders in the NDC development process.

68% contain explicit gender objectives.

In the 2016 round of analyzed INDC submissions, 28 countries (49%) mentioned gender inclusion in their text (**Figure 1a**). The same group of members included one or more mentions of gender and/or women in 53 submissions (93%) during the 2021 cycle (**Figure 1b**).

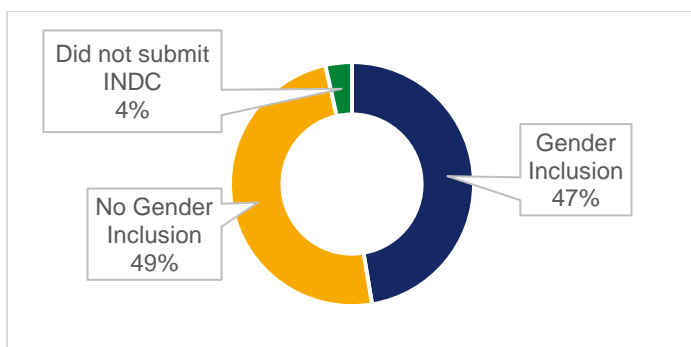


Figure 1a. Gender inclusion in select NDC Partnership countries' INDCs (2016 data)

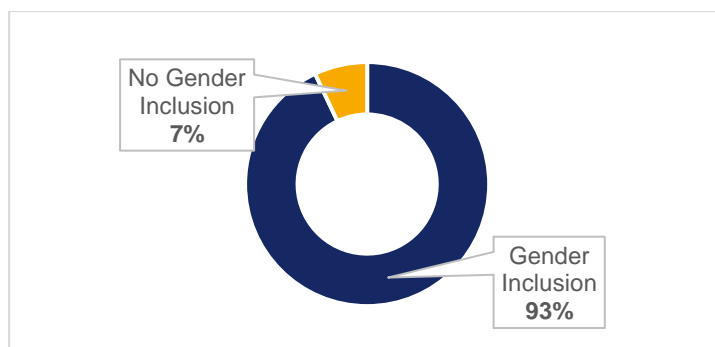


Figure 1b. Gender inclusion in select NDC Partnership countries' NDC (2021 data)

Spotlight on gender-responsive processes

The NDC Partnership identifies key areas for determining the degree to which these actions address gender equality in its Developing Gender-Responsive NDC Action Plans: A Practical Guide.¹³ These categories were used to analyze the revised NDCs and findings are summarized in **Figure 2**.

¹² Note that one of the 44 countries had not submitted an INDC at the time of the previous analysis and were thus omitted from the analysis. It is also worth highlighting that the 44 countries are among the current NDC Partnership countries and that the 2016 data do not reflect NDC Partnership membership at that time. "Gender in Mitigation Actions: EGI Brief;" IUCN, EGI and USAID; April 2016; https://www.climatelinks.org/sites/default/files/asset/document/Gender%20In%20Mitigation%20Actions_April%202016.pdf.

¹³ "Developing Gender-Responsive NDC Action Plans: A Practical Guide;" NDC Partnership; March 2021; https://ndcpartnership.org/sites/default/files/Gender_Responsive_NDC_Action_Plans_Practical_Guide-March-2021.pdf.

Among the analyzed Partnership updated NDCs, there is a notable involvement of women stakeholders in NDC development: 23 of the 53 mentioned they included women, women’s groups, institutions, or ministries. Additionally, 36 contained explicit gender objectives and 27 noted gender activities. However, few countries included gender-responsive budgeting, the inclusion of gender and/or sex-disaggregated indicators, and specification of gender stakeholders responsible for implementing actions (see **Figure 2**).

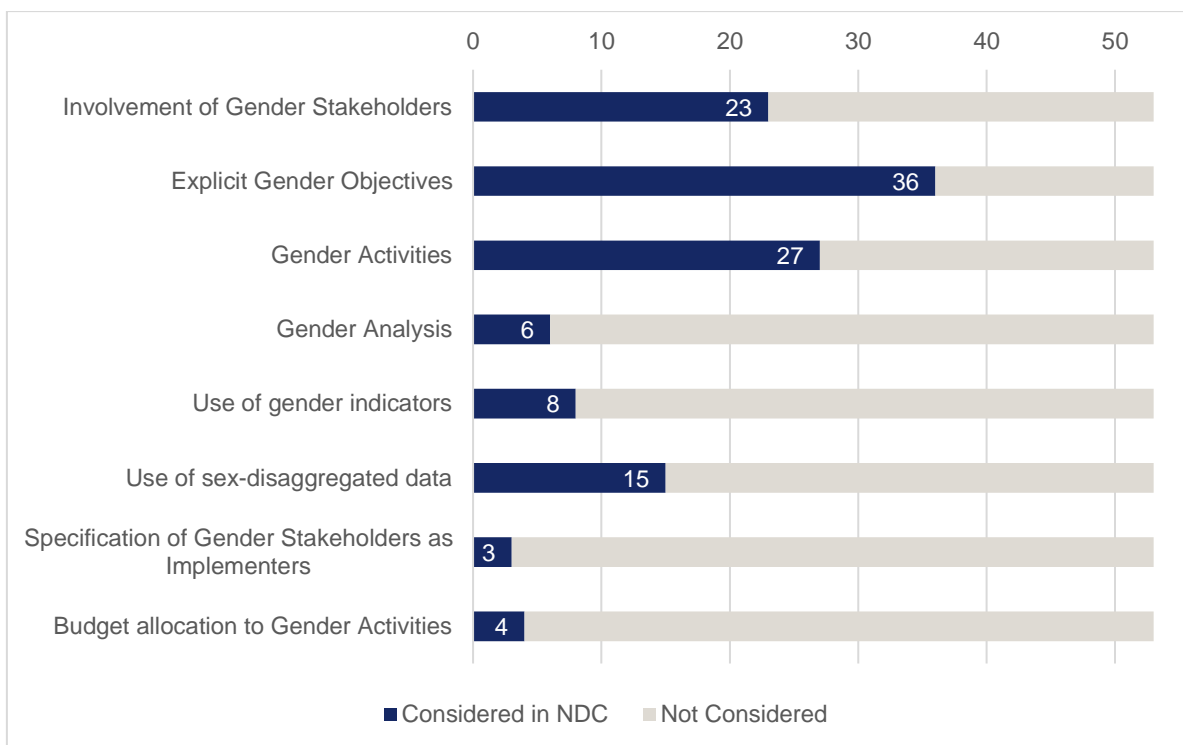


Figure 2. Gender-responsive criteria within 53 NDC Partnership member updated NDCs

Spotlight on adaptation and mitigation

The adaptation section of updated NDCs discusses country-specific vulnerabilities to climate change and identifies goals, actions, and priorities to adapt to adverse impacts, sometimes highlighting existing programs and efforts. Gender considerations and commitments in adaptation can ensure all citizens equally benefit from climate actions and interventions. The mitigation section focuses on countries’ establishment of their greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction targets. The Paris Agreement does not explicitly note gender when referencing mitigation measures. However, a handful of countries are examining how gendered differences in certain sectors impact emission reductions.

A number of NDC Partnership member countries addressed gender considerations within their adaptation and mitigation sections of their NDCs. These include commitments to conducting analyses on vulnerabilities, adopting gender-responsive approaches to adaptation in priority sectors, recognizing the need to strengthen women’s contributions to drive greater engagement of all genders in essential sectors, or noting the role of women in household, biomass energy decisions.

Figure 3 highlights the NDC Partnership countries that include gender considerations in their adaptation and mitigation sections of their NDC.

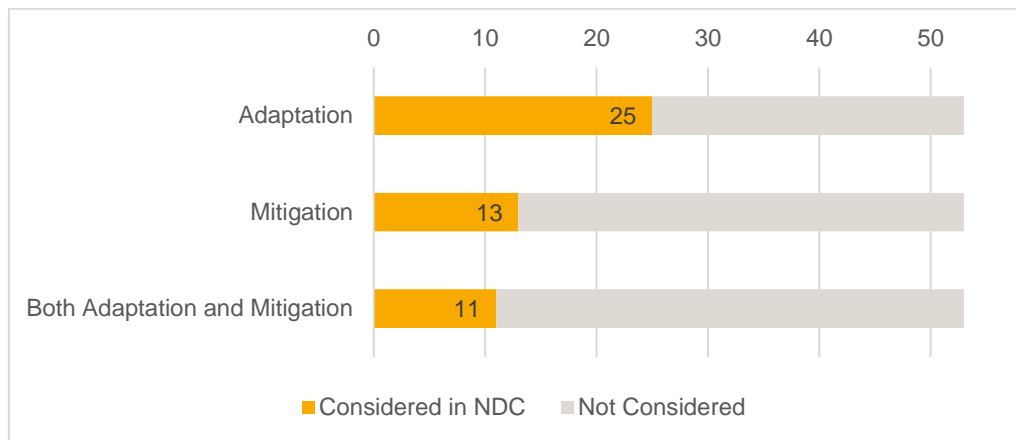




Figure 3. Gender considerations in adaptation and mitigation section of 53 NDCs

Box 1. Country Examples

 Dominican Republic	<p>Adaptation</p> <p>The Dominican Republic commits to incorporating a gendered perspective into their National Plan for Adaptation to Climate Change. It recognizes the “role of women as agents of change and encourages their full participation in the transformation of society towards low-carbon and resilient development.”¹⁴</p>
 Cambodia	<p>Mitigation</p> <p>Cambodia commits to reducing emissions by 64.6 million tons of carbon dioxide (MTCO₂e) per year by 2030. This is a 41.7 % reduction compared with the Business as Usual (BAU) case. The forestry and other land use sector (FOLU) is expected to provide the major share of 59.1% emission reduction. Other sectors such as energy, agriculture, industry and waste are also expected to contribute significantly. Cambodia affirms that gender-responsive mitigation actions and indicators can help measure and reduce reliance on biomass energy sources and diversify household and community energy consumption, given that “women are often responsible for household energy-related decisions in rural areas, and women, the poor and the marginalized are often last to gain energy access.”¹⁵</p>

Spotlight on gender inclusion in priority sectors

The gender dimensions of climate change represent an array of cross-cutting issues that overlap and intersect across key sectors, such as natural resource management, agriculture and food security, disaster risk reduction, infrastructure, transport, among others.¹⁶ **Figure 4** shows explicit gender considerations within NDC

¹⁴ Dominican Republic NDC; 2020; P. 42;

[https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/ndcstaging/PublishedDocuments/Dominican%20Republic%20First/Dominican%20Republic%20First%20NDC%20\(Updated%20Submission\).pdf](https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/ndcstaging/PublishedDocuments/Dominican%20Republic%20First/Dominican%20Republic%20First%20NDC%20(Updated%20Submission).pdf)

¹⁵ Cambodia NDC; 2020; P. 50;

https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/ndcstaging/PublishedDocuments/Cambodia%20First/20201231_NDC_Update_Cambodia.pdf

¹⁶ Priority sectors defined by country.

Partnership member updated NDCs.

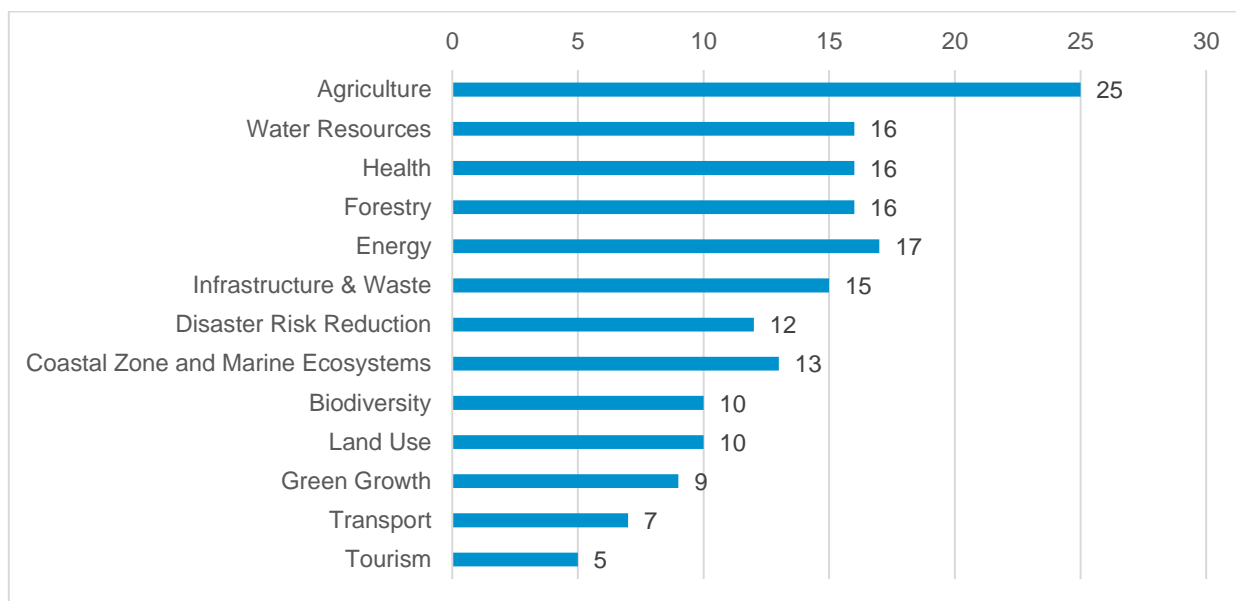





Figure 4. Gender considerations in priority sectors of 53 NDCs

Box 2. Country Examples¹⁷

 <p>Honduras</p>	<p>Agriculture</p> <p>Honduras outlines a number of agriculture-related gender-responsive activities, such as, the promotion of gender-responsive field schools on climate change adaptation; the implementation of a gender-responsive adaptation strategy in the infrastructure sector that encourages the construction of water reservoirs for domestic consumption and family agricultural and livestock production; and a gender-responsive mechanism for agricultural insurance against losses and damages, as well as the provision of technical and financial support for family gardens with women, Indigenous Peoples and Afro-Hondurans and young people as the target beneficiaries of both activities.¹⁸</p>
 <p>Paraguay</p>	<p>Water Resources</p> <p>Paraguay commits to, by 2030, “establish a culture of conservation and sustainable water use through multilevel and multistakeholder management” and includes a line of action to “promote the role of women as agents of change in access and efficient use of water resources for consumption and production.”¹⁹</p>
	<p>Health</p> <p>Seychelles acknowledges that climate change impacts on health, such as increased prevalence of vector-borne diseases due to hotter and wetter monsoon seasons and exposure to extreme</p>



¹⁷ “Gender and National Climate Planning: Gender Integration in the Revised Nationally Determined Contributions;” IUCN; 2021; <https://genderandenvironment.org/gender-and-ndcs-2021/>.

¹⁸ Government of Honduras NDC; 2021; p.15;

https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/ndcstaging/PublishedDocuments/Honduras%20First/NDC%20de%20Honduras_%20Primera%20Actualizaci%C3%B3n.pdf

¹⁹ Republic of Paraguay NDC; 2021; p. 67;

https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/ndcstaging/PublishedDocuments/Paraguay%20First/ACTUALIZACI%C3%93N%20DE%20LA%20NDC%20DEL%20PARAGUAY_Versi%C3%B3n%20Final.pdf

Seychelles	weather, are still poorly understood and adaptation action has been limited to date. The country also recognizes that existing health systems are not ready for the array of new and more severe challenges posed by climate change, which could have disproportionate impacts on women. Therefore, to contribute to the key climate change adaptation actions on health, priorities include strengthening the capacity of health systems to protect and improve population health that meets Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRHR) needs of women and young people in an unstable and changing climate. ²⁰
 Nepal	Forestry Nepal sets targets that community-based forest management committees will have 50% women representation and proportional representation of Dalits and Indigenous People in key posts by 2030. ²¹
 Panama	Energy Panama commits to implementing new technologies and educating and empowering young people and women community leaders to ensure sustainable, future investments in the energy sector. It also recognizes the importance for energy policies and strategies to analyze women's differentiated energy uses and roles in the sector in its Energy Transition Agenda. ²²

Spotlight on youth, Indigenous Peoples, LGBTQI+ individuals and groups, and mentions of gender-based violence

The Paris Agreement states that Parties should respect “the rights of Indigenous Peoples, local communities, migrants, children, persons with disabilities and people in vulnerable situations and the right to development, as well as gender equality, empowerment of women and intergenerational equity”²³. While it is notable that more NDC Partnership countries addressed gender inclusion within their updated NDCs, the documents also highlighted inclusion of often-marginalized groups such as youth and Indigenous Peoples, with references to intergenerational equity. **Figure 5** highlights these inclusions in the 53 NDC Partnership member NDCs that included gender considerations.

²⁰ Government of Seychelles; 2021; p. 35; https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/ndcstaging/PublishedDocuments/Seychelles%20First/Seychelles%20-%20NDC_Jul30th%202021%20_Final.pdf

²¹ Government of Nepal; 2020; p. 5; [https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/ndcstaging/PublishedDocuments/Nepal%20Second/Second%20Nationally%20Determined%20Contribution%20\(NDC\)%20-%202020.pdf](https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/ndcstaging/PublishedDocuments/Nepal%20Second/Second%20Nationally%20Determined%20Contribution%20(NDC)%20-%202020.pdf)

²² Republic of Panama; 2020; p. 44; <https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/ndcstaging/PublishedDocuments/Panama%20First/CDN1%20Actualizada%20Rep%C3%BAblica%20de%20Panam%C3%A1.pdf>

²³ Paris Agreement; United Nations; 2015; https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/english_paris_agreement.pdf.

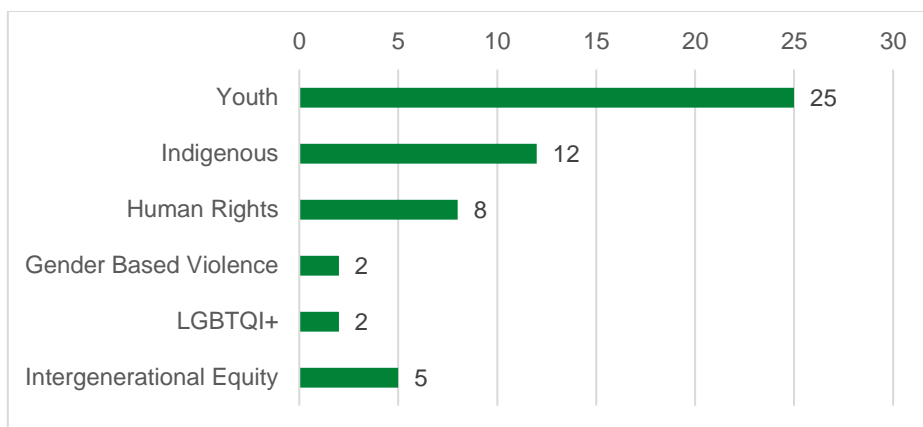


Figure 5. Social inclusion considerations in 53 NDCs

RECOMMENDATIONS

The increased inclusion of gender in analyzed NDCs, particularly in comparison with IUCN’s 2016 INDC data, suggests that these countries are moving toward greater alignment with Parties’ commitments to gender equality, as outlined in the Paris Agreement, its rulebook, as well as the UNFCCC Enhanced Lima Work Programme on Gender and its Gender Action Plan. NDC Partnership members’ attention to variables such as the inclusion of gender stakeholders in NDC development and the establishment of gender objectives signals that these countries have an understanding of the fundamental building blocks of climate action gender-responsiveness.

However, the number of countries that explicitly included gender analysis, gender budgeting and gender indicators in their NDC text remains low. This presents an opportunity to improve understanding of these elements and perhaps the need for greater investment and capacity building in these areas, so that climate action can better respond to and support the diverse gender- and socioeconomic-specific needs of individuals at local and national levels.

Equipped with these insights, the NDC Partnership will continue to mobilize support for country members seeking to address the identified gaps and strengthen gender considerations in their NDC implementation.

Credits

This brief was developed by Melissa Luna, Ana Rojas, Laura Sabater and Cate Owren of the International Union for Conservation of Nature and has been prepared drawing on the 2021 Environment and Gender Information analysis of all updated NDCs, “[Gender and National Climate Planning: Gender Integration in the Revised Nationally Determined Contributions](#).” Hannah Girardeau and Kelsey Ring of the NDC Partnership Support Unit supported the writing of this brief.