

# Integrating Gender Equality Into NDC Implementation

The Commonwealth NDC Webinar Series

Event Summary | March 2022



# Integrating Gender Equality into NDC Implementation

## The Commonwealth NDC Webinar Series

### Meeting Summary

**March 2022**

## Contents

Background .....	1
Main Outcomes.....	2
Welcome and Opening Remarks .....	3
Presentation: Integrating Gender Equality Into Climate Action Policies, Strategies and Commitments .....	3
Interactive Discussion.....	4
Moderated Panel Discussion: Experiences and Lessons Learned in Integrating Gender Equality in NDC Implementation .....	5
Closing Remarks and Way Forward.....	8
ANNEX I: Agenda.....	9
ANNEX II: Event Photos .....	10

## Background

The Commonwealth Secretariat through its Commonwealth Climate Finance Access Hub (CCFAH) supports Commonwealth member countries access climate finance to support their climate mitigation, adaptation and resilience efforts, thereby contributing towards the implementation of their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).

Under the NDC Partnership's Climate Action Enhancement Package (CAEP) initiative, the Commonwealth Secretariat delivered targeted support for the enhancement and implementation of NDCs in four member countries in 2021, namely Belize, Eswatini, Jamaica and Zambia, with the technical assistance of the Commonwealth National Climate Finance Advisers. The CAEP is a demand-driven and impact focused initiative to deliver targeted support to countries for the enhancement and implementation of their NDCs, including the provision of in-country technical expertise and capacity building.

The Commonwealth Secretariat also delivered a gender and NDC report entitled “***Gender Integration for Climate Action: A Review of Commonwealth Member Country Nationally Determined Contributions<sup>1</sup>***”, which mainly provides an in-depth understanding on how and to what extent, Commonwealth Member Countries are integrating gender and social inclusion into their NDCs.

Mainstreaming of gender equality in all climate policies, strategies and targets is critical to ensuring more effective, inclusive and sustainable climate action that take in account the diverse impacts of climate change to different groups, in particular, the disproportionate burden on women.

It is against this backdrop and on International Women's Day, 2022 that the Commonwealth Secretariat hosted the Webinar on ‘***Integrating gender equality into NDC Implementation***’ on Tuesday 8 March 2022. The session was attended by close to 200 participants from Governments, NGOs, Private Sector and other development agencies.

The aims and objectives of the Webinar were to:

- Share the experiences and lessons learned by countries and stakeholders in designing and implementing more gender responsive NDCs.
- Enhance awareness of the critical elements to be considered for meaningful integration of gender equality into national climate action policies and strategies.
- Discuss the way forward in working towards better integration of gender equality in climate action, specifically, in NDC implementation and the gaps that exists.

The agenda for the meeting is provided in Annex I and the ensuing sections of this meeting summary provide the main discussion points by sessions of the webinar.

---

<sup>1</sup> The final report is available on the Commonwealth Secretariat website and accessible via the following link <https://thecommonwealth.org/our-work/Commonwealth-Climate-Change-Programme>

## Main Outcomes

The following were the key outcomes and conclusions from the Webinar:

- Women must be positioned as positive agents of change across all spheres of climate action from decision making, policy formulation, project implementation, monitoring and reporting.
- Positive progress has been made in integrating gender equality in climate action particularly in NDCs. There remains gaps and challenges with regards to a more in depth look at gender equality along specific categories and in key sectors but also opportunities to address these.
- Identification and detailed articulation of gender issues and requirements in different sectors is critical and must be enhanced, as this influences formulation, design and implementation of subsequent climate action interventions.
- Financing of gender responsive climate action is vital to advance gender equality outcomes. Financial instruments employed must be wide ranging, customised and innovative.
- It is essential for gender responsive climate action to bring together, gender and climate experts respectively and facilitate continuous cross-pollination and better alignment between the two sectors.
- Sharing of knowledge and experiences on both successes and challenges of integrating gender equality in climate action is essential to enhance action and replicate and scale up best practices

## Welcome and Opening Remarks

**Mr. Unnikrishnan Nair, Head of Climate Change, Commonwealth Secretariat**, opened the webinar and welcomed all participants, acknowledging the achievements and contributions of the women in all spheres. He expounded on the ongoing work around gender mainstreaming and the climate change agenda within the Commonwealth Secretariat and its member countries, including through CCFAH. He acknowledged the varying degrees of gender sensitivity around existing climate policies and constraints faced by member countries in accessing financing which make it even more challenging to make progress on this front. Mr. Nair concluded his remarks by urging all parties to join hands together and work towards concrete actions and reaffirmed that the Commonwealth Secretariat is committed to providing the required support to member countries in pursuit of their goals and priorities.

**Mr. Robert Bradley, Knowledge and Learning Director, NDC Partnership** commenced his remarks by giving a broad overview on the NDC Partnership, that assists countries in turning their NDCs into concrete actions in a demand-driven approach, and on the Climate Action Enhancement Package (CAEP). Mr. Bradley underscored that gender equality is an important component within the work of the NDC Partnership and women and girls are powerful agents of change, essential to making climate actions successful and sustainable. As such, the NDC Partnership has a knowledge portal, comprising of tools and resources on gender equality and climate change actions, for use and sharing amongst partners and stakeholders so that experiences and lessons learnt can be replicated and scaled up. In closing, Mr. Bradley reiterated that climate change and gender equality is an ongoing effort and all stakeholders need to continue to work together and strive to as effective as possible.

## Presentation: Integrating Gender Equality Into Climate Action Policies, Strategies and Commitments

**Ms Fleur Newman, Action Empowerment Unit Lead - Gender, Youth and ACE, UNFCCC Gender Focal Point and Focal Point for Women, UNFCCC** gave a broad overview on gender issues and work within the UNFCCC, including the Gender Action Plan and its five priority areas. She acknowledged the evolving acceptance of the importance of gender integration in all national climate policies and strategies. Ms Newman stressed the need to integrate gender considerations in climate change policy projects and programmes in order to meet the 1.5 degrees Celsius target and that international frameworks should support the integration of gender on climate change issues, environment policy and disaster risk reduction. In addition, she emphasised on the need for more gender experts working in the climate space and understanding how issues such as gender-based violence, land tenure and women's rights to own resources influence climate action.

The importance of gender analysis and sex disaggregated data was highlighted and the need to adequately apply data in the climate context. Ms Newman concluded by noting there is progress, but it is important to communicate this to enable everyone to learn, gain inspiration, knowledge and resources in this sphere.

## Interactive Discussion

The key points discussed during the question and answer session which followed the presentation by Ms. Fleur Newman, are outlined below:

- **Reflection on the non-climatic factors for vulnerability.**

It was noted that a key challenge was bringing together institutions and stakeholders responsible for women's empowerment or for addressing inequality the institutions responsible for carrying forward climate action. Given that these were very different technical areas, overcoming this would require narrative, behavioural and systemic and political change.

- **Measures used to monitor gender integration and tools to integrate gender responsive climate action.**

It was reported that there very many tools and resources that are available for gender responsive climate planning but the application of the appropriate tools to given context is still an issue. Thus, the importance of understanding the context well then applying the tool that best fits the context was reiterated.

- **Outreach to regional institution responsible for gender.**

It was elaborated that the UNFCCC (UN Climate Change) Secretariat is a treaty body and does not implement projects. Its role is to coordinate, facilitate and catalyze. The Secretariat uses its Regional Climate Weeks as a vehicle to enhance engagement with and between regions.

- **Integration of gender into all action plans / NDCs versus more specific targeting by sector.**

In discussing this, the role of gender analysis in to assessing whether or not integration is done within an NDC or only within the specific sectors was underlined. This analysis helps to better understand the whole context and where the greatest impact would be, whilst bearing in mind, the available funding sources. While the approach would differ per country but the overarching intention should be for integration of gender equality in all sectors so that eventually all may be covered.

- **The best way to increase the number of women in decision making.**

Emphasis was placed on the vital role of decision makers in creating and enabling the required spaces to ensure women's participation in decision making, however deliberations and engagement involving decision makers, women's groups and stakeholders etc would be helpful in arriving at the best approach bases on context.

## Moderated Panel Discussion: Experiences and Lessons Learned in Integrating Gender Equality in NDC Implementation

During the panel discussion moderated by **Jennifer Nyamgal, Adviser Gender, Commonwealth Secretariat**, representatives from the NDC Partnership, Green Climate Fund (GCF), Africa Development Bank (AfDB), Commonwealth Secretariat and International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) gave their experiences and lessons learned in integrating gender equality in NDC implementation.

The following questions guided the discussion<sup>2</sup>:

- **The NDC Partnership Support Unit works directly with countries to fast-track climate and development action. Please reflect on the progress that is being made in strengthening gender inclusion in NDCs supported by the Partnership in the last five years or so?**

**Hannah Girardeau, Gender and Youth Associate, NDC Partnership**, in her intervention expressed that similar to the Commonwealth Secretariat, NDC Partnership conducted a review on a number of NDCs and analysed how countries considered gender in the content and processes to develop it. The review found that 93% of NDCs included a mention of gender which is very high and similar to what other analysis has shown. Ms Girardeau outlined that the latest round of NDCs signalled those countries had begun to include some of the fundamental building blocks of gender responsive climate action in their policies and plans. However, inclusion of some elements such as gender analysis, gender indicators and gender responsive budgeting was still rare and there were opportunities to further invest in these areas moving forward. It was shared in the support provided by NDC Partnership under the CAEP, there were 44 requests to strengthen inclusive approaches with a focus on gender equality and women's empowerment as well as some countries targeting youth engagement. 52 countries enhanced their NDCs by making this process more inclusive, considering impacts on vulnerable groups and capacity building amongst other things. Overall, the NDC Partnership had observed much greater alignment with gender equality as outlined in the Paris Agreement.

- **The GCF has led the major climate funds in prioritising gender equality as an integral component of work that it funds. Would you be able to give your perspective on the key sectors where this has been an effective approach so far, and those where it might be more challenging?**

**Bertha Chiudza, Gender and Social Specialist, GCF** commenced her remarks by sharing that the GCF was the first climate finance mechanism to mainstream gender perspectives from the onset of its operations, noting that gender mainstreaming is an essential decision making element when deploying any type of climate finance. The GCF's commitment to gender equality centres around gender responsive climate action programmes and projects and gender equality is applied to all programmes that GCF

---

<sup>2</sup> Responses to participant questions have been incorporated in the summary of interventions provided speakers.



supports not only those gender focused. Ms Chiudza, outlined that the GCF's gender responsive approach is outlined in its updated Gender Policy which was adopted by the GCF Board in 2019. The fund aims to have an impact within eight adaptation and mitigation areas where mainstreaming of gender is through the Gender Assessment and Action Plan, which forms a key requirement of all GCF financed activities. These eight areas are aligned with country's NDCs and the GCF works to ensure that stakeholder consultations, planning, implementation, development of Monitoring, Verification and Reporting (MRV) systems are as inclusive as possible but driven by countries.

- **Antigua and Barbuda submitted its updated NDC in September 2021 which includes specific NDC targets related to women and youth. Can you briefly outline the process that Antigua and Barbuda undertook to incorporate gender equality in developing its updated NDC and the plans to ensure this continues through in the implementation of the NDC?**

**Sasha Jattansingh, Commonwealth National Climate Finance Adviser to Antigua and Barbuda, Commonwealth Secretariat**, commenced her intervention by noting that Antigua and Barbuda had a very ambitious NDC which demonstrates its commitment and vision for creating a low carbon and climate resilient country. The updated NDC includes targets for mitigation adaptation which are especially designed to reduce transitional risks to support an inclusive gender responsive approach to the energy transition with a special focus on women fully participating in the new economy. The revision process, led by the Department of Environment and supported by the NDC Partnership's CAEP was designed to be inclusive and follow an all of society and all of government participatory approach to enable the NDC to consider the special needs and circumstances of different groups including women and youth. Further, under CAEP the country also developed an NDC Implementation Plan which was being finalised. Ms Jattansingh reiterated that considerable amounts of climate finance will be required to meet Antigua and Barbuda's ambitious updated targets. Hence, as a Commonwealth National Climate Finance Adviser, Ms. Jattansingh is supporting a climate finance proposal worth approximately USD 10million for a project on a gender responsive approach to redevelopment of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in the main greenhouse gas emitting sectors, which are traditionally dominated by men in Antigua and Barbuda. Notably, as Antigua and Barbuda had incorporated gender in their NDC, they are better able to integrate it in implementation and in accessing finance.

- **AfDB is committed to prioritising the mainstreaming of climate change and green growth in its portfolio. The challenge is to do this in gender responsive ways. Would you be able to share what the AfDB has learned in its efforts to integrate gender inclusion as it supports its member countries in pursuing a green growth agenda?**

**Edith Ofwona Adera, Coordinator, Africa Adaptation Acceleration Program (AAAP) and Regional Principal Officer, AfDB**, in her response reported that AfDB was committed to mainstreaming gender and climate change in its operations. The bank ensures that both climate related policies, strategies and action plans incorporate and reflect gender dimensions and vice a versa. Ms Adera shared three lessons learned from AfDB's experience, firstly the need for sex aggregated data to enable robust gender analysis particularly looking at impacts across different sectors. It is for this reason, AfDB was

funding a project on capacity building for gender statistics and monitoring systems. She emphasized that while it is important to have gender statistics and clear indicators it is even more important to overlay gender vulnerabilities over climate impacts, to gain a better understanding of underlying issues and potential solutions. In this regard the AfDB was pioneering with a pilot project in Rwanda to produce an interactive map, methodologies and approaches for conducting this overlay of data. The AfDB's intention was for the project to be rolled out to other countries upon successful piloting in Rwanda. Secondly, on the critical element of financing it was noted that majority of climate finance does not necessarily target some the gender related challenges. A final lesson shared from AfDB experiences was the importance of articulating gender needs and issues per sector and not in a generalised broad-brush manner. This has implications in the design and implementation of solutions as it leads to better understanding of what the issues are.

- **The report IUCN released last year - Gender and National Climate Planning - which identified the sectors in which gender integration was occurring in NDCs. It identified the more underserved sectors, which include conservation and biodiversity. These are areas in which IUCN has a clear focus, could you reflect on what needs to be prioritised to strengthen gender integration in these sectors?**

Ana Rojas, Senior Gender and Climate Change Adviser, International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) began her intervention by noting that IUCN was the oldest and largest environmental organisation and network which brings together a diverse mix of organisations ranging from governments, academia and civil society. She highlighted that the IUCN's report on *Gender and national climate planning: Gender integration in the revised Nationally Determined Contributions*<sup>3</sup> provided an opportunity to reflect and recognise that progress had been made on gender equality (especially when compared to the previous report in 2016), despite existing challenges in some sectors. Ms Rojas, noted that part of addressing remaining challenges in the climate and biodiversity sectors, is ensuring that local women are the drivers of solutions building on their strengths, wide knowledge and use of natural resources and biodiversity. Emphasis was also placed on the need for harmonisation at national level and bringing together different disciplines in the areas of environment and gender to encourage cross fertilisation amongst specialists and bringing these conversations down to women and communities the local level.

- **CCFAH supports Commonwealth countries to access climate finance, how important is gender-responsive budgeting in contributing towards strengthening integration of gender across different sectors, and how is the Hub supporting such processes?**

Unnikrishnan Nair, Head of Climate Change, Commonwealth Secretariat, reported that CCFAH is a 2015 Commonwealth Heads of Government (CHOGM 2015) mandate to support small and other vulnerable Commonwealth countries to access climate finance. Throughout its five years of operation CCFAH has gained lessons and experiences on supporting countries on climate change project development where the integration of gender is an essential requirement. He reported that within this period gender

---

<sup>3</sup> Report can be accessed here: <https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/49860>

assessments and action plans have been part of all the projects that CCFAH has supported. Notably CCFAH has supported Jamaica and Saint Lucia to secure funding for gender responsive climate action. Mr. Nair underlined the need for customised financing and innovative financial instruments for gender responsive adaptation and mitigation projects. He highlighted a critical element of CCFAH's support, namely knowledge management that enables capturing, sharing and upscaling of knowledge and best practice. In this regard, CCFAH's technical assistance deliverables, provided under NDC Partnership's CAEP to Eswatini on *Climate Public Institutional Expenditure Review (CPEIR)*<sup>4</sup> and Jamaica on *Socio-economic and Financial Implications Assessment of Climate Change in Jamaica*<sup>5</sup>, are available for other Commonwealth countries to learn from and CCFAH would continue sharing experiences, knowledge and best practice. Mr Nair stated that moving forward the Commonwealth Secretariat was committed to appointing a specialised CCFAH Gender Climate Finance Experts to support member countries in developing gender specific climate change projects.

## Closing Remarks and Way Forward

**Uzoamaka Nwamarah, Adviser, Climate Change, Commonwealth Secretariat** in her closing remarks thanked all participants and panel members for the rich insights and discussions, referring to the 2022 International Women's Day theme, Ms. Nwamarah, stressed that for the world to have a sustainable future NDCs must be gender responsive. In summary she stated that speakers had recognised the need to have women as positive agents of change across all the spheres of climate action right from policy formulation to project implementation, the importance for strong country ownership and engagement of all stakeholders and need to articulate the gender issues by sector and have targeted instruments to address these. It was reiterated that there was tried and tested machinery other there that all could use and learn from. Looking ahead, the Commonwealth Secretariat would continue leveraging the co-benefits of gender equality and climate action especially through the activities of the CCFAH and working with member countries and partners such as NDC Partnership. To take forward recommendations from the Commonwealth's report on *Gender Integration for Climate Action: A Review of Commonwealth Member Country Nationally Determined Contributions*, the Commonwealth Secretariat would be positioning a Commonwealth Gender and Climate Finance Adviser within CCFAH.

---

<sup>4</sup> Eswatini's CPEIR report can be accessed here: [https://production-new-commonwealth-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/migrated/inline/Eswatini\\_CPIER\\_UPDF.pdf](https://production-new-commonwealth-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/migrated/inline/Eswatini_CPIER_UPDF.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Jamaica's socio-economic assessment can be accessed here: [https://production-new-commonwealth-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2022-04/Socio-economic%20and%20Financial%20Implications%20of%20Climate%20Change%20on%20Jamaica\\_Final\\_UPDF%20March%202022.pdf?VersionId=OF-HEbY0NfMqm3O3VnYH05bUZxd5x7GfS](https://production-new-commonwealth-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2022-04/Socio-economic%20and%20Financial%20Implications%20of%20Climate%20Change%20on%20Jamaica_Final_UPDF%20March%202022.pdf?VersionId=OF-HEbY0NfMqm3O3VnYH05bUZxd5x7GfS)

## ANNEX I: Agenda

Timing (1 hr 30 mins)	Item
<b>Event Moderator - Jennifer Namgyal, Adviser, Gender, Commonwealth Secretariat</b>	
(10 mins)	<b>Welcome and Context Setting</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unnikrishnan Nair, Head of Climate Change, Commonwealth Secretariat</li> <li>• Robert Bradley, Knowledge and Learning Director, NDC Partnership</li> </ul>
(5 mins)	<b>Video - Supporting gender integration in climate action across the Commonwealth</b>
(10 mins)	<b>Presentations: Integrating gender equality into climate action policies, strategies, and commitments (5-7mins)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fleur Newman, Action Empowerment Unit Lead - Gender, Youth and ACE, UNFCCC Gender Focal Point and Focal Point for Women, UNFCCC</li> </ul>
(10 mins)	<b>Participant Engagement - Q&amp;A Session</b>
(30 mins)	<b>Moderated Panel Discussion: Experiences and lessons learned in integrating gender equality in NDC implementation (Each intervention to be 3 -5 mins max)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hannah Girardeau, Gender and Youth Associate, NDC Partnership</li> <li>• Bertha Chiudza, Gender and Social Specialist, Green Climate Fund (GCF)</li> <li>• Sasha Jattansingh, Commonwealth National Climate Finance Adviser, Antigua and Barbuda</li> <li>• Edith Ofwona Adera, Coordinator, Africa Adaptation Acceleration Program (AAP) and Regional Principal Officer, Africa Development Bank (AfDB)</li> <li>• Ana Rojas, Senior Gender and Climate Change Adviser, Representative from International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)</li> <li>• Unnikrishnan Nair, Head of Climate Change, Commonwealth Secretariat</li> </ul>
(20 mins)	<b>Participant Engagement - Q&amp;A Session / Interventions from the floor</b>
(5 mins)	<b>Closing Remarks and Way Forward</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uzoamaka Nwamarah, Adviser, Climate Section, Commonwealth Secretariat</li> </ul>

## ANNEX II: Event Photos



Commonwealth Secretariat

Marlborough House, Pall Mall

London SW1Y 5HX

United Kingdom

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



The Commonwealth