

Climate Change and Gender

The Commonwealth Climate Change Programme

Overview

Climate change affects sections of the society differently, with women and girls disproportionately affected by adverse impacts due to socio-economic and cultural barriers that mean they have less access to resources and information and are less included in decision making. However, women and girls play a strong role in addressing climate change and are positive agents of change. Thus, inclusive climate action is essential to ensure the varied needs and impacts of climate change on women, girls, men and boys are considered in proposed interventions.

At the same time, there is recognition that worldwide, gender responsive climate action still needs to be strengthened in all activities concerning adaptation, mitigation, and related means of implementation (finance, technology development and transfer, and capacity building), as well as decision making on the implementation of climate policy. Global efforts to address climate change increasingly recognise that addressing gender and social inequality will be integral to effectively addressing climate change

It is for this reason that climate change and gender is high on the agenda for the Commonwealth Secretariat and is one of the four priority areas identified by member states towards achieving broader gender equality goals. The Commonwealth Secretariat's Climate Programme through its flagship initiative the Commonwealth Climate Finance Access Hub (CCFAH) aims to mainstream gender at all levels.

The CCFAH Support on Gender and Climate Change

The CCFAH assists Commonwealth small and other vulnerable states enhance their access to climate finance by embedding highly skilled long-term expertise in the form of Commonwealth Regional and National Climate Finance Advisers in relevant institutions and government departments respectively. The support provided cuts across pipeline and project development, capacity building - both human and institutional strengthening, as well as cross-Commonwealth cooperation, and sharing of knowledge and scaling up and replication of best practices.

The Advisers mainstream gender and youth considerations to advance gender equality across all their work including:

- Policy and strategy development
- Project development

- Capacity building and knowledge management
- Advocacy

This ensures that all the programmes and projects the CCFAH provides technical assistance on are responsive to the needs of women, men, girls and boys, considering them as not only beneficiaries of climate action but also as equal participants in decision making, policy development and project implementation.

Project Highlights

Mainstreaming Gender in Policy and Strategy Development

- Eswatini

The CCFAH provided technical assistance to the Government of Eswatini to review its revised National Gender Policy 2020 - 2030 to strengthen climate related gender equality outcomes. The updated policy provides a revised framework for gender equality and equity in Eswatini. It outlines the country's vision for gender equality and is designed to guide stakeholders and institutions at all levels, on how to advance gender equality and equity and mainstream gender across all sectors.

Gender Specific Project Development Support

- Jamaica

The CCFAH through its Commonwealth National Climate Finance Adviser for Jamaica, secured a grant of US\$270,000 from the Green Climate Fund Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme towards the project 'Facilitating a Gender Responsive Approach to Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation'. Further to Jamaica's inclusion of gender considerations in their updated NDCs, this project is strengthening the nation's institutional coordination on gender, promoting gender responsive climate action and ensuring that policies, pro-programmes and projects address gender inequalities.

- Saint Lucia

The CCFAH supported Saint Lucia to secure funding worth approx. USD 100,000, from the Enabling Gender-Responsive Disaster Recovery, Climate and Environmental Resilience in the Caribbean Project (EnGenDER), to establish baselines of gender needs by sector.

- Eswatini

The CCFAH provided technical assistance to develop the 'Women in Eswatini for Climate Adaptation (WE-CAN): Accelerating NDC Implementation through Food-Environment-WASH Nexus' Project, worth approx. USD 600,00.

- Antigua and Barbuda

In Antigua and Barbuda, on-going assistance is being provided by the CCFAH to the Department of Environment to develop a proposal (valued at approximately USD 10 million) to support a gender-responsive approach to the redevelopment of TVET (technical vocational education and training) programmes.

Capacity Building and Knowledge Management on Gender Responsive Climate Action

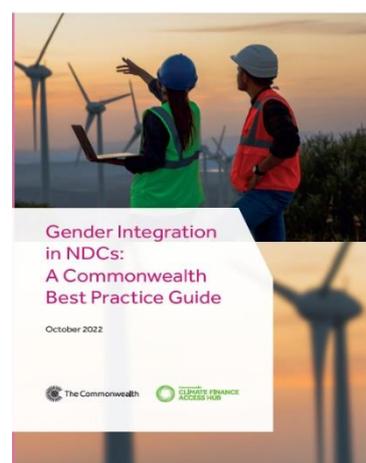
- **Gender Integration for Climate Action: A Review of Commonwealth Member Country Nationally Determined Contributions**

The Commonwealth Secretariat launched a report at COP26 on - Gender Integration for Climate Action: A Review of Commonwealth Member Country Nationally Determined Contributions. The report provides useful best practice examples and recommendations for strengthening gender responsiveness in Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) across the areas of prioritising gender in context, policy integration of gender, institutional coordination across climate change and gender, capacity building in technology, monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV) systems, sex-disaggregated data and information as well as financial resources for gender inclusion.



- **Gender Integration In Nationally Determined Contributions: A Commonwealth Best Practice Guide**

Building on the review of gender integration in the NDCs of Commonwealth Member countries, the Commonwealth Secretariat has developed a Commonwealth Best Practice Guide on Gender Integration in NDCs to support Commonwealth member countries in their journey towards gender equality in climate action. The guide encourages users to reflect on the NDC update processes to date and provides guiding tips and a sample of best practice examples from across the Commonwealth, in conjunction with other useful references, all aimed at supporting increased integration of gender equality. The best practice guide goes further by breaking down on the Commonwealth's progress under each best practice area and succinctly maps out a timeline of tangible action points which commonwealth countries can undertake to enhance gender integration in the run up to the 2025 NDC update cycle.



- **Commonwealth NDC Webinar Series - Integrating Gender Equality in NDC Implementation**

This Commonwealth NDC Webinar series in collaboration with the NDC Partnership delivered on the CCFAH knowledge management strategy to spur the accumulation and transfer of critical knowledge across countries and regions for the replication and scaling up of innovative and successful climate action projects and initiatives. The second webinar of the series, 'Integrating Gender Equality in NDC Implementation', was held on International Women's Day, 2022 with the theme on and aimed at sharing the experiences and lessons learned by countries and stakeholders in designing and implementing more gender responsive NDCs. The webinar was attended by close to 200 participants from Governments, NGOs, Private Sector and other development agencies

and brought together representatives from the Commonwealth Secretariat, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Green Climate Fund (GCF), the Africa Development Bank (AfDB) and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

Key Takeaways and Lessons Learned from the CCFAH Experience

- **Women and girls must be positioned as agents of change** and not only beneficiaries in the climate change narrative while recognising their unique vulnerabilities and disproportionate impacts they face.
- There is a need for **policy alignment and clear statements of intent**:
 - Including and cross-referencing climate and gender priorities in all national and sector policies, plans and strategies in a consistent manner will multiply the efficacy with which climate and broader gender goals can be met.
 - A clear statement of intent in relation to gender equality better enables integration of the same into national climate policy and strategies. Thus, Commonwealth member countries firmly committed to gender equality have presented gender goals in executive or introductory statements of their climate plans, and have included dedicated sections on gender integration and specific actions.
- There is a need for **increased capacity and technical assistance** on incorporating quality gender considerations in:
 - climate finance concept notes and proposals - ensuring women are decision makers and beneficiaries
 - Policy development - ensuring line ministries speak to and engage on gender matters from the onset
 - Project Implementation - having clearly articulated gender issues by sector and have targeted instruments to address these
- In addition to mainstreaming efforts, there is a great need for **scaled up targeted gender specific climate change proposals** that can attract higher funding envelopes.