



OPEN LETTERS FROM GENDER CHAMPIONS





The last months have shown that it is more urgent than ever to join forces to foster gender equality. In the midst of a global challenge posed by climate change, COVID-19 adds economic and social pressures on our society and jeopardises achievements already made. Both crises aggravate existing structural barriers and reveal that we have not yet reached our goal of gender equality.

GIZ and our main commissioning parties, the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU), are committed partners in the implementation of the ambitious NDCP Gender Strategy. Gender equality is a human right and represents one of GIZ's key values as outlined in our own comprehensive gender strategy and our safeguards and gender management system. We align all strategies and processes with this principle and advise our partners to do the same in project design and implementation. By connecting climate change and gender equality in NDCs and NAPs, we promote inclusive and successful development outcomes.

In Burkina Faso, a BMZ-funded global project supported the first official NDC investment plan from the francophone region. It takes into account aspects of gender justice and was developed in a participatory multi-stakeholder approach involving the Ministry of Women's Affairs. In Vietnam, a BMU IKI-funded project teamed up with different international organizations to provide technical support for the government in mainstreaming and advancing gender equality into the update of Vietnam's NDC.

Many countries that have revised and enhanced their NDCs face the challenge to mobilize significant public and private resources for successful implementation. GIZ supports gender-smart solutions by piloting gender-sensitive financing strategies in selected NDCP member countries and leveraging private finance through targeted cooperation with women-owned enterprises (SMEs).

With the prioritization of gender, the NDC Partnership has demonstrated its commitment. Now is the time to jointly ensure women's and girls' rights, participation and leadership for building a resilient, climate-friendly and inclusive post-pandemic world. This is what GIZ and I personally stand for.

Ingrid-Gabriela Hoven

Managing Director Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH



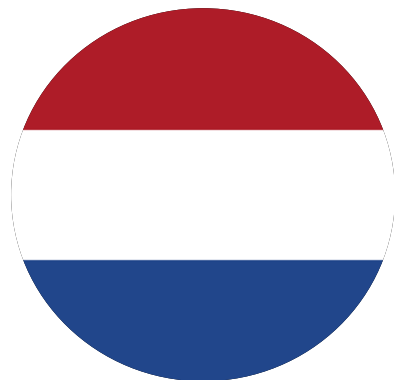
Climate change is happening and appears to be speeding up. Many people around the world, both women and men, are already affected by it, albeit in different ways. On the whole, women in developing countries tend to bear the brunt of the impacts of climate change.

For the Netherlands, integrating gender equality in our international support to climate action is not only a matter of principle or basic human rights, but also a necessary condition for the success of our programs and for achieving the SDGs and Paris Goals. Experience and research show that development programs, including on climate action, are most effective - and their outcomes most sustainable - when they build on the strengths and capacities of both genders, addressing both their needs and vulnerabilities.

We therefore promote and actively pursue gender equality in our international support programs, through gender-sensitive policies and procedures, but also through awareness creation and training within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and dialogues with development partners.

As Co-Chairs of the NDC Partnership in 2019-2020, Costa Rica and the Netherlands have led the way in the development of an NDCP Gender Strategy, building on the Partnership's guiding principles. The strategy was adopted in October 2019 and implementation has been taken up swiftly. We are encouraged to see that through the provision of support, gender-responsive actions have increasingly been incorporated in NDC enhancement and implementation.

We can only effectively address the climate crisis if we tailor climate policies and actions towards explicitly supporting women and girls, as those often most affected by climate change and as those often best placed to take strong action against it. NDCs must prepare the ground for such gender-responsive actions.



Carola van Rijnsoever

***Ambassador for Sustainable Development
Director of Inclusive Green Growth Department
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Climate change represents one of the most complex challenges of our time. The transformation required has shown how responses to climate change offer an opportunity to overcome the prevailing barriers to women's rights' enjoyment, and exercise.

At least seven principles govern successful gender-responsive initiatives – I call them the right “Is” to address climate change. They guarantee inclusive participation embracing all groups' voices, regardless of their ethnicity, religion, gender, age, or class. They are set to improve women and men's quality of life and advocate to remove legal or social obstacles to women's rights.

Innovative in its purpose and process, they propose solutions that go beyond ordinary and traditional and find new and inspiring tools and techniques while expanding the capacities to approach climate change both in adaptation as mitigation. Inspiring actors at all levels to push beyond 'business as usual,' demonstrating that implementing gender and climate change commitments is possible.

Also, they are initiatives that incite transformational change by rearranging how climate change needs to be approached—providing equal opportunities for women and men to champion the solutions and providing the necessary means to build the capacity and capability to secure equitable livelihoods for all.

Creating an impact on climate change response's overall goal by reducing anthropogenic emissions and providing adaptive resilience opportunities for both women and men and increasing environmental sustainability by ensuring that solutions are within the limits of the planet and do not lead to irrational use or exploitation of natural resources.

The time for action has never been more imperative. The recovery plans post-COVID-19 and the global commitment towards the transition to a green economy open up possibilities to build a new future based on the three dimensions of sustainable development (economic, social, and environmental) where gender equality is at the basis of a progressive structural change.

Lorena Aguilar

***Regional Coordinator of International Cooperation and Research at
the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences in Costa Rica (FLACSO)
Secretaría General and ex Vice-Chancellor of Costa Rica.***





Women's empowerment, participation and leadership is key if we want to succeed in tackling the climate crisis. Gender equality is a prerequisite for securing the resilience of societies overall, also in the context of climate change.

We are all expected to present new or updated, more ambitious, NDCs ahead of COP26. This is an excellent opportunity to ensure the participation of women and girls, men and boys in both elaboration and implementation of our NDCs, as well as ensuring that NDCs are gender responsive.

For Sweden both gender equality and climate change are top priorities for the government.

Sweden is taking steps to make sure gender mainstreaming is at the heart of the work of our government agencies and is at the core of implementing the Paris Agreement. We are developing a strategy on how to mainstream a gender perspective in the implementation of the Paris Agreement nationally.

We are also proud to report that 87 percent of the climate projects managed by our development agency Sida are gender responsive. We are gender mainstreaming all our development-related climate action.

Sweden is fully committed to promoting a gender perspective in climate policies both domestically and internationally, and to supporting women's engagement and gender equality in negotiations under the UNFCCC. As part of our commitment, Sweden is supporting the UNFCCC Secretariat to strengthen the participation of women from developing countries in the UNFCCC process in accordance with the gender action plan.

We are committed to a gender-responsive approach, which is a critical element in the design of efficient climate policy. A first step in enhancing gender equality is often to start collecting the data, learning how climate action affects men and women differently in our countries. This knowledge will help us develop projects that benefit all, and that reach more groups in society.



Mattias Frumerie

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Canada recognized early on that gender responsive policy development is critical for delivering government policies and programs that are inclusive and barrier-free. The Government of Canada has been using gender-based analysis (GBA) since 1995 to be more responsive to specific needs. GBA+, an expanded process used to assess how diverse groups of women, men, and gender diverse people may experience policies, programs and initiatives, has become a key policymaking tool, particularly with respect to climate action.

The adoption of the Canadian Gender Budgeting Act in 2018 brought gender mainstreaming one step further by enshrining the principles of gender equality and greater inclusiveness into the annual federal budget process and by making information public on how government decisions may affect different groups of women, men, and gender-diverse people. The Government also committed to conduct GBA+ for the policies and programs outlined in Canada's Strengthened Climate Plan, released in December 2020, to maximize positive benefits for those most affected by climate change, including low-income Canadians, women, and Indigenous communities.

Gender considerations are also a cornerstone of Canada's foreign policy, including its international climate change efforts. For example, Canada's international climate financing is aligned with our Feminist International Assistance Policy, which recognizes that advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls are the best ways to build a more peaceful, inclusive, and prosperous world. Building the capacity of women and empowering them to become agents of change, including in responding to climate change, is a priority for the Government of Canada, and we will continue to support initiatives such as capacity-building workshops for women climate negotiators.

Looking ahead, as we recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, we have a far-reaching opportunity to build back better by accelerating the transition to a low carbon economy and ensuring sustainable development for all. To help achieve this, we all need to improve the availability of data related to gender identities and climate change to conduct effective gender and diversity analysis. With this foundation, we will be better positioned to adopt plans and policies that are inclusive and leave no one behind.



Steven Kuhn

Canada's Chief Negotiator for Climate Change



Under the Climate Promise (including NDC SP countries), 97% of countries have included gender-related activities in their work plans to support their NDC enhancement and revision process. We are seeing the main areas of progress that countries have committed to surround more inclusive dialogue, more informed planning, and mainstreaming processes. Based on the work countries have planned, 51 percent of countries will utilize inclusive consultation processes, and within this group, 37 percent will specifically target women's organizations and/or leaders. At the ministerial level, 20 percent of countries will include the national gender institutions in NDC coordination mechanisms. To improve planning, 38 percent of Climate Promise countries indicate they will undertake gender analysis with over half of these countries indicating they will make these analyses sector specific. Less progress has been made on policy initiatives at this stage, however, with a growing number of countries (31 or 26%) supporting some level of climate/gender mainstreaming at national, sector, and/or sub-national levels, the evidence base to push for stronger integration at policy levels is taking shape.

While the gaps and opportunities that countries face in supporting gender equality and women's leadership in NDC plans and implementation varies, UNDP believes that there are three key entry points that help make the greatest impact. These include:

- (1) Effective governance** – Gender-responsive climate action requires inter-ministerial coordination and actors who are well-capacitated in climate and gender dimensions at national, sectoral, and sub-national levels. Ensuring that women are included in consultation process can help shape the type and prioritization of climate interventions while strengthening women's leadership in climate decision-making and action can harnesses the capacity women have to be change agents and accelerate implementation.
- (2) Inclusive planning**- Multi-stakeholder processes and political buy-in should guide NDC planning through gender analyses that identify capacity gaps and planning priorities, by integrating gender dimensions into NDC Implementation Plans, and through mainstreaming gender responsive climate action into national and sector strategies and plans. Strengthening the integration of gender targets and indicators into MRV systems and developing gender-responsive investment plans that prioritize climate measures that target women and/or have co-benefits for women can help to operationalize NDC outcomes.
- (3) Integrated policy frameworks** - Identifying how NDCs can leverage and/or influence existing policies and support in better articulating climate policy instruments to reflect gender differentiated climate change impacts will underscore a country's commitment to supporting gender-responsive climate action and provide the policy foundation needed for such action.

Targeting support to a country's needs across these three entry points while building upon countries' existing efforts to systematically mainstream gender will facilitate governments to implement their NDCs with stronger gender responsiveness.

Verania Chao

**Programme Specialist, Gender and Inclusion
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Gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment are critical components of the Philippines' NDC. They are key to achieving the twin goals of climate action and gender equality.

This is something we strongly recognize in the Philippine NDC. Our work at the Climate Change Commission emphasizes climate action for and by women and gender-diverse persons. This is our belief: women and gender-diverse persons are not only victims of climate change. They are strong drivers of climate ambition and catalysts of climate action.

Moving forward, the Philippines is harmonizing its gender budgeting policy and climate budget tagging frameworks, with a view to confirming through data if the gender budgeting policy is linked to results in climate change adaptation and mitigation.

As we do so, we keep our eyes on the horizon, where we see a window to pursue our twin goals. The world is turning to clean energy, going low carbon, and pursuing a food-secure future; thus, we are likely to see increased investments in modern and sustainable food and energy technologies. We have a unique opportunity to strengthen gender mainstreaming—especially if we can localize our actions in critical sectors like agriculture and energy.

In all this, our objective is to reach, engage, and empower women and gender-diverse persons so that together, we can increase resilience to climate change impacts as we decrease social inequalities. We aim to build a planet that is both safer and fairer; a world that is livable, and worth living in.

We all share that same dream / May we now all find the strength and courage and resolve to turn it into reality.



Rachel Anne Herrera

Commissioner
Climate Change Commission
Republic of the Philippines



The awareness that climate change has differentiated impacts on gender, has led to the deliberate inclusion of gender considerations in the development of policies, strategies and plans that guide SIDS' response to climate change.

Women in the civil service play a lead role in driving climate action. It is further evident where women have had to come forward to lead in domestic recovery efforts post-disaster. Indeed, Saint Lucia has, over the years, through its Climate Change Adaptation Policy, Third National Communication, National Adaptation Plan and its updated 2020 Nationally Determined Contribution, ensured that gender gained more prominence by incorporating it in its national development planning process. These policies have been developed through a process that embraced gender equality, while recognising that Saint Lucia's path to gender responsive climate change action is still ongoing.

I have learned that there is so much potential and value in our women who lead, as well as those who support on the sidelines. While gender-related issues may be very different here compared to other parts of the world, it does not mean that they do not exist. At the end of the day, our space at the table is not just for partaking in the "meal" prepared for us, but that space must allow us to be part of the planning of the menu, from which we benefit and which will impact our individual bodies quite differently.

The NDCP Gender Strategy has provided a means by which countries can respond to the call by the Paris Agreement for the integration of gender equality as one of the guiding principles for climate action. The Partnership is also supporting Saint Lucia in the unpacking of its updated NDC, which includes gender considerations.

NDC implementation in the face of COVID-19 requires innovation and technology application, an area in which women have found footing that is comparable with that of their male counterparts. The NDC Partnership must seek to promote the achievements made, especially in SIDS.



Honourable Minister, Dr. Gale T.C. Rigobert

***Minister for Education, Innovation, Gender Relations and Sustainable Development
Saint Lucia***