



Turning Climate Promise Into Inclusive Climate Action

Regional Dialogue Brief

Hosted by UNDP Asia Pacific Bangkok Regional Hub

23-25 March 2021

Table of Contents

- 01** Introduction
- 02** Shared Challenges
- 03** Country Examples: Integrating Gender and Inclusivity Into Climate Action
- 05** Key Entry Points for Strengthening the Integration of Gender in Climate Action
- 09** Way Forward
- 09** Annex 1: Resource Materials
- 10** Annex 2: Regional Dialogue Agenda

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated existing social, economic and governance inequalities in countries around the globe. Governments are faced with huge challenges of addressing the immediate impact of COVID-19 such as the overburden of its health care systems as well as designing a sustainable recovery pathway. At the same time, the climate crisis continued to drastically impact the lives and livelihood of citizens, leading governments to deal with a twin crisis strongly interlinked with one another.

To strengthen resilience towards future shocks/pandemics, governments have been collaborating with non-state actors to chart a recovery pathway that promotes stronger linkages between economic recovery and climate ambition. International commitments such as the Paris Agreement can be a guiding document for countries to ensure their recovery efforts are monumental and transformative. UNDP's Climate Promise initiative, the world largest global initiative to support countries to enhance their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) are helping policymakers to adapt to the new normal and build forward differently. Recent data indicates that out of the 118 countries supported by the Climate Promise initiative, including 27 countries in Asia and the Pacific region, a majority of countries still intend to increase climate ambition despite the impacts of COVID-19

The impact of both the pandemic and the climate crisis has continued to impact groups within society differently, factors such as social status, gender, poverty, and access to resources all influence the degree of vulnerability to these crises. As a result, women and girls continue to be disproportionately impacted by the twin crises, due to perception prevailing in our societies and gender roles. Additionally, gender norms and power dynamics also shape how women and men of diverse backgrounds experience or contribute to insecurity in a changing climate.

Efforts to build community resilience to future crisis and climate risks must go hand in hand with efforts to advance gender equality and women's empowerment. NDCs offer an important space for developing gender specific climate strategies that advances and sustains peace. Additionally, women around the globe are coming up with innovative nature-based solutions and leading ambitious mitigation and adaptation initiatives. Through the Climate Promise, as of November 2020, 113 counties have stated that they are working to strengthen gender in their NDCs.

In this regard, the Climate Promise team and the Gender team at UNDP's Bangkok Regional Hub co-hosted a regional dialogue to facilitate knowledge, good practices and lessons learnt on integrating inclusivity and gender equality into climate policy and implementation. The regional dialogue was attended by key stakeholders from the Asia Pacific region including government counterparts, NGOs, academic intuitions and thematic experts. These brief highlights the shared challenges, country examples on integrating gender and inclusivity into climate action and key entry points that came out of the regional forum discussions.

(1) UNDP Climate Promise Progress Report, page 2

(2) [20 Insights in NDCs in 2020](#), page 10

Shared Challenges

Existing inequalities prevent communities from adapting to climate change and building community resilience. For many countries across the region, the priority of communities including women is to focus on everyday challenges around poverty, hunger, gender-based violence and loss of livelihood opportunities. As a result, it limits their capacity to address and adapt to climate change impacts which further exacerbates these inequalities. Government, private sector, CSOs and other key stakeholders need to prioritize interventions that addresses the root causes of gender inequality including social and gender norms, structural barriers and power dynamics for sustainable climate action.

Currently, women are not meaningfully engaged in discussions related to shaping and leading climate change solutions at national or local level. Additionally, when they are included, in majority of the cases their voice and expertise are not acknowledged or integrated into policies, strategies and interventions. This lack of participation at the decision-making level at national and local level translates to gender blind climate data, restrictive access to natural resources including land ownership and limited adaptive capacity to address climate change by women.

Even though climate action strategies, policies and project documents may have identified gender inequality and social exclusion as key barriers, direct interventions to address these inequalities are limited and resources allocated to address these inequality barriers are limited or not funded.

Lack of access to simplified climate information and uninterrupted access to education for women and girls also continues to be a barrier in building climate change awareness, their ability to lead climate change solutions and engage in national climate policy making spaces. Currently, climate policies are not translated in a manner that is relatable to community members and as a result leads to a lack of ownership in national level strategies that are implemented at local level.

Weak linkages between national and local level stakeholders remains a key challenge towards effective climate action. Locally led climate adaptation interventions that integrates the knowledge and experiences of indigenous groups and women do not have access to platforms, networks or funding to facilitate scale up of these initiatives. There is also limited mechanisms in place to document and incorporate good practices from these initiatives into national policies and strategies.

The COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated existing inequalities for women including the gender digital divide. The pandemic has resulted in dialogues and consultations being moved to online platforms and given the variation in internet access and usability by communities across the region, women are disproportionately impacted by this sudden digital transformation. As the priority of countries move towards recovery strategies, voices of diverse groups including women should be included in the planning, design and implementation stages to ensure new strategies do not lead to a widenings of existing gender inequalities and new emerging areas such as green recovery strategies are gender responsive.

Country Examples: Integrating Gender and Inclusivity Into Climate Action

Bangladesh: Integrating Nature Based Solutions into Inclusive Climate Change Action

To better understand the impact of climate change in Bangladesh, a series of analysis were done to assess the type of climate related issues that were impacting the country and community groups that were impacted by climate change. Findings were then integrated into framing climate change solutions. Bangladesh has extensive experience in leading climate change adaptation initiatives by local governments, CSOs and the national government has also been taking steps to integrate adaptation into national planning and mainstreaming it across the different sectors. Additionally, the priority placed on educating girls in Bangladesh has contributed to the acceleration of community led adaptation initiatives with the strong leadership from women leaders.

The following approaches were recommended for the effective implementation of climate action initiatives:

- Linking communities especially the knowledge and voice of women and indigenous groups with national level decision makers regarding their local ecosystem.
- Key stakeholders making investments (public or private) decisions should be provided with evidence, tools and capacity to increase their knowledge and understanding on the impact and benefit of inclusive climate action.
- Through pilots and smaller scale climate initiatives demonstrate results to decision makers so that they can be scaled up and integrated into national climate policies.

There is now a strong recognition of the key role women play in climate action by decision makers and coupled with the findings from the climate analysis, new entry point such as integrating inclusive Nature Based Solutions (NBS) can now be explored in the context of Bangladesh.

Bhutan: Gender and Climate Change Assessment

A gender and climate change assessment was done to better understand the climate change and its impact on gender dynamics. The assessment focused on agriculture, energy and waste looking at the overall policy mechanism and programming for those sectors. The findings provided evidence-based research that could be incorporated into the policy and planning process. 55% of those surveyed highlighted that women were disproportionately impacted by climate change. The recommendation from the assessment focused on addressing gender gaps at policy level, within institutional framework, awareness campaigns, capacity building initiatives, participation and empowerment initiatives, evidence collection processes and education and behavior change initiatives.

Country Examples: Integrating Gender and Inclusivity Into Climate Action

Pakistan: Integrating Gender and Social Inclusion in Climate Action Policy

Pakistan conducted a gender analysis of existing sectoral national policies including the National Climate Change Policy (2016), Nationally Determined Contributions (2016), National Disaster Response Plan (2019) to better understand the gaps from a gender perspective. In the initial 2016 NDCs of Pakistan, gender was recognized as a vulnerable group but there were no specific policy measures mentioned to support vulnerable group including women. During the NDCs enhancement process, priority was placed on stronger integration of gender into this process. The following approaches are being undertaken for this.

- A gap analysis was conducted to develop a strong evidence rationale around the differentiated impact of climate change among men and women.
- A policy and institutional framework developed through a gender analysis of existing sectoral national and sub-national policies to identify gender gaps that should be strengthened further.
- A working paper with a set of policy recommendations for each thematic area under NDCs.
- A wide range of stakeholders ranging from line ministries to provincial departments consulted as part of the NDC enhancement process.

As part of the institutional arrangements for the NDCs, Pakistan has two working groups focused on adaptation and mitigation with gender prioritized as a cross cutting issues. Currently, the government is being supported by GCF and IUCN to develop a Climate Change Gender Action Plan aimed at building capacity of government counterparts to mainstream gender in their policies and projects and at the decision-making level.

S&P Global: Gender-Responsive Carbon Offsetting

S&P launched a program to offset their Scope 3 business travel emissions. The offsets were assured by Natural Capital Partners, in line with the global standard Carbon Neutral Protocol. One of the key projects supported by S&P over the last three years under this is the clean cookstove project. This project focuses on supporting women to purchase clean cookstoves and/or provide them cookstoves through a financing agreement leading to the improvement of their health and of their families and reducing greenhouse emissions.

Key Entry Points for Strengthening the Integration of Gender in Climate Action

The regional dialogue through the speaker discussions and participants' interactions identified key entry points for climate actors on stronger integration of gender in the climate action policies and implementation.



Priority #1: Building Linkages Through Collaboration and Coordination

Connecting the dots and building partnerships with government, private sector and CSOs is crucial for inclusive climate action. CSOs can be a key partner in supporting the effective roll out of national climate strategies at the local level, raise awareness on climate change as well as in amplifying the voices and concerns of women and marginalized groups at the national level for a more inclusive approach to climate action.



Priority #2: Strengthening Knowledge and Capacity of Key Stakeholders

Strengthening capacity and knowledge of key stakeholders through trainings, guidance notes and case studies/pilot initiatives can be a successful approach for mainstreaming gender in climate action. Building greater understanding around the climate change and gender equality nexus and showcasing good practices will open new opportunities for greater dialogue and action including integrating nature friendly approaches to national climate plans during the planning and budgeting process of climate initiatives.



Priority #3: Facilitating Bottom-Up Learning Approaches

Community led climate solutions that incorporates the experience and knowledge of women, indigenous groups and minority groups should be linked to national strategies and policies for effective and sustainable climate action. Platforms can be established to showcase cost effective local climate solutions that are led by women leaders, facilitating opportunities for scale up of these initiatives and documentation of good practices.

Priority #4: Driving Inclusive and Transparent Participation

Inclusive and transparent participation of all groups in communities is key for driving local ownership of climate initiatives. It is crucial to establish mechanism that allow for the engagement of minority groups including women in shaping and leading climate solutions as well as ensuring that the effective implementation of these initiatives doesn't lead to a widening of existing gender inequalities.

CSOs can also play a crucial intermediary role between government and communities by supporting to amplify women's experiences and highlight the persistent gender inequalities preventing women's engagement in climate action. Consultation mechanisms set up must be accessible to a wide range of CSOs and climate actors to ensure diversity and inclusivity in the approach to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

Priority #5: Amplifying Voice with Influence

Government and key stakeholders must ensure that the presence of all groups in society is matched with equal recognition of their contribution to shaping and leading climate solutions. Government policies and strategies should explicitly support women's participation and representation at the decision-making level and create an enabling environment for women's voices to be integrated into climate action. Opportunities should be explored at the national, regional and international level for women to meaningfully participate in climate discussions and negotiations.

Priority #6: Moving Beyond Capacity Building

Climate action should go beyond building capacity of women to adapt to climate change and address structural barriers that would lead to sustainable climate action. Climate stakeholder should strengthen existing partnerships and establish new partnerships to open opportunities for women to access climate smart agricultural skills, climate related technical fields and funding through gender responsive training, policies and strategies.

Efforts to build women's entrepreneurship to facilitate the design of climate solutions should be matched with efforts to engage relevant stakeholders such as financial banks to ensure climate related bank loans and insurance schemes that are gender responsive. Women's entrepreneurship initiatives should also focus on supporting women to enter new markets within the climate change ecosystem such as carbon markets. Additionally, ensuring uninterrupted access to education for women and girls can empower them to lead in climate change narrative at the local level and advocate for gender responsive climate action at local and national level.

Priority #7: Addressing GBV Through Inclusive Climate Action

Climate induced disasters and environmental degradation including floods and prolonged drought can exacerbate violence against women and girls. It is important to partner with government and non-government stakeholders to identify climate change related drivers that can increase incidents of GBV for women and girls. Collaborate with national and local actors to ensure these factors are addressed through climate change initiatives/actions

Priority #8: Planning, Implementing and Monitoring Climate Initiatives Through an Inclusivity Lens

It is crucial to support gender analysis, research and sex-disaggregated data to identify root drivers of gender inequality and integrate key findings not only at the project concept level but also at outcome output and activity level to address divers of gender inequality and achieve the project outcome. M&E frameworks should be designed to capture progress towards inclusivity and gender equality as well.

Priority #9: Funding for Gender-Responsive Local Climate Action

Strengthening institutional capacity of climate stakeholders on gender equality and climate change can be an effective strategy for integrating gender dimensions into national and local planning and budgeting processes. Through collaboration across sectoral ministries, innovative approaches can be explored for the integration of gender in climate finance. Gender-responsive climate change frameworks and strategies need to be matched with adequate financial resources to support local-level implementation and scale up of local climate solutions that are inclusive.

Priority #10: Translating Climate Policies into Simple Communication

Greater emphasis should be placed on translating climate change-related laws, policies and regulations into simple information that can be disseminated at the local level. Information communicated must be relatable to the lived experiences of community members including women and should be disseminated through avenues that is accessible by different groups in communities.

Priority #11: Promoting Inclusive Language from Global to Local Levels

National and international actors within the climate action ecosystem need to be engaged to ensure international treaties and framework's encompass language that includes all groups in society and ensure its translation into national climate strategies and policies

Priority #12: Creating Dialogue Spaces By Regional and International Organizations

Regional and international organizations can provide platforms for government, private sector and CSOs to come together to discuss shared challenges, inclusive climate action and innovative approaches for bolder climate action especially in addressing key areas such as gender-responsive climate finance and women, peace and climate security. Organizations can also facilitate the meaningful participation of marginalized groups in online climate discussions and support the documentation of good case studies and role models including women peacebuilders leading inclusive climate action in the region.

Priority #13: Engaging the Private Sector

Engage the private sector in sustainable and inclusive climate action through training and capacity building initiatives and closely coordinate with private sector partners to ensure nature conservation and biodiversity protection regulations are followed.

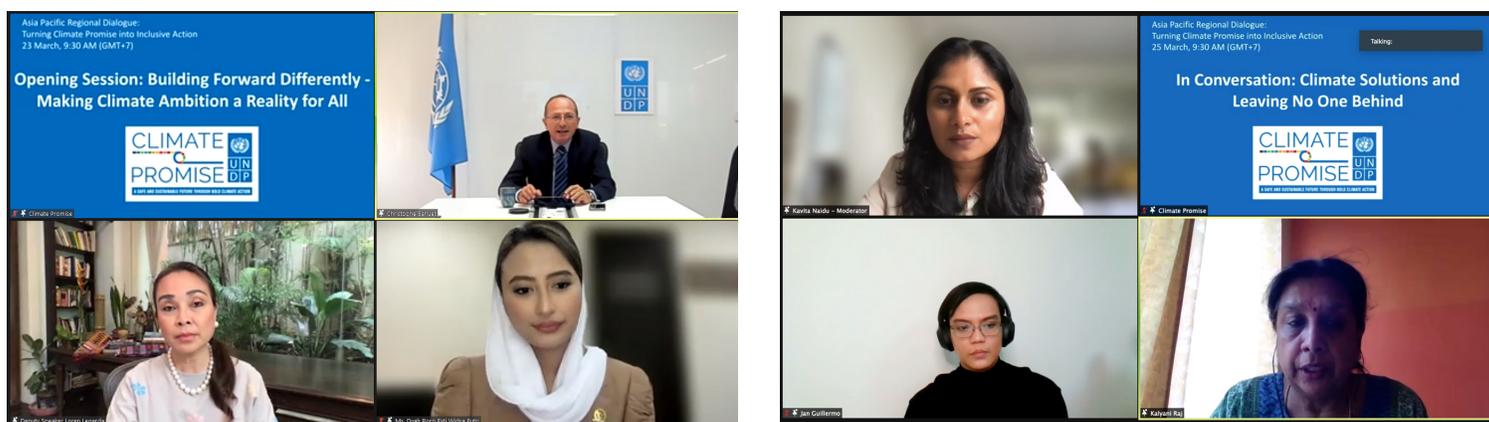
Support private sector to engage women entrepreneurs leading climate initiatives given the growing interest by investors around gender lens investing. Additionally, the private sector should be encouraged through showcasing of strong business case and successful initiatives to invest in climate projects that advance gender equality.

Priority #14: Promoting Green Recovery

Collaborate with government stakeholders to integrate green strategies such as NbS into the COVID-19 recovery strategies and ensure economic assessments and environment impact assessments are complemented with gender impact assessment to better inform recovery policies and strategies. Efforts to move towards a green economy should focus on creating opportunities and access to both men, women and minority groups within the green industry.

Way Forward

The key takeaways from the regional dialogue will be incorporated into the framing of the Asia Pacific Climate Week discussions, to be held on 6-9 July 2021. Additionally, deep dive online clinics will be organized ahead of COP26 to explore practical steps for the unpacking of these entry points for the Asia Pacific countries.



Annex 1: Resource Materials

UN Environment Report, [Are we Building Back Better? Evidence from 2020 and Pathways for Inclusive Green Recovery Spending](#), March 2021

WOCAN, [W+ Standard](#), May 2021

UNDP & WOCAN, [Guideline for a Participatory Gender-Responsive Climate Cost-Benefit Analysis](#), May 2021

Forum for the Future, [Renewable Energy to Responsible Energy: A Call to Action](#), March 2021

Annex 2: Regional Dialogue Agenda

Day One: 23rd March 2021, Tuesday

	<p>Opening Session: Building Forward Differently – Making Climate Ambition a Reality for All</p> <p>Opening Remark by Kanni Wignaraja, Assistant Secretary-General, Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific, UNDP.</p>
<p>0930-1100 Hrs.</p>	<p>A panel discussion on building a climate-resilient future featuring speakers from government and climate champions.</p> <p>Moderator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christophe Bahuët, Deputy Regional Director for Asia Pacific, UNDP <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hon. Dyah Roro Esti Widya Putri, Member of Parliament, Indonesia Parliament • Hon. Loren B Legarda, Senator, Senate of the Philippines • Hon. Nazhat Shameem Khan, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Fiji to the United Nations in Geneva and President of UN Human Rights Council
<p>1115-1215 Hrs.</p>	<p>Fireside Chat: Climate Change and Inequality</p> <p>A dialogue on the interlinkages between climate change and social/gender inequality and how to chart a way forward towards a just economic recovery through inclusive climate solutions.</p> <p>Moderator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balazs Horvath, RBAP Senior Economic Advisor, Strategic Advisor for BRI, UNDP <p>Speaker:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Ofa Kaisamy, Manager of the Pacific Climate Change Centre, SPREP • Ms. Cheryl Chen, Director, Corporate Responsibility & Sustainability, Asia Pacific at S&P Global

1230-
1345 Hrs.

Panel Discussion: Swimming Against the Tide- Nature Based Recovery

The panel discussion will share good practices including smart policies and key enablers that are driving the movement for Nature-Based Solution. The session will also discuss the impact of these solutions for creating a just and inclusive society and a sustainable economic recovery.

Moderator

- Verena Linneweber, Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP Samoa

Speakers:

- Dr. Saleemul Huq, Executive Director, ICCCAD
- Beau Damen, Natural Resource Officer, Climate Change and Bioenergy, FAO
- Naw Ei Ei Min, Director, Promotion of Indigenous and Nature Together, Myanmar

Day Two: 24th March 2021, Wednesday

0930-
1030 Hrs.

Fireside Chat: Gender-Responsive Climate Solutions for Climate-Related Security Risks and Sustaining Peace

A conversation around how gender dynamics shape climate-related risks and the impact of engaging women in natural resource governance and climate-resilient livelihood for sustaining peace.

Moderator

- Catherine Wong, Policy Specialist, Climate and Security Risk, UNDP

Speakers:

- Froilyn Tenorio Mendoza, Founding Member and Executive Director, Teduray Lambangian Women's Organization Inc, Philippines
- Kim Robertson, Gender Statistics Advisor, Sustainable Pacific Consultancy, Pacific Islands
- Joanne Lee, Sustainable Pacific Consultancy, Pacific Islands
- Kim Robertson and Joanne Lee of Social Development Program

1045-
1200 Hrs.

In Conversation: An Equitable Climate Finance Framework

This session will bring together key actors in the climate finance framework to discuss the current level of gender integration in climate finance, funding policies that facilitate the implementation of gender-responsive climate action and the current gender gap in accessing climate finance.

Moderator

- Asad Maken, Governance Specialist, UNDP

Speakers:

- Saila Farzana, Joint Secretary, Local Government Division, Bangladesh
- Noor Syaifudin, Deputy Director, Center of Climate Finance and Multilateral Policy, Fiscal Policy Agency, Ministry of Finance, Indonesia
- Jeannette Gurung, Founder & Executive Director, WOCAN

1230-
1345 Hrs.

Panel Discussion: Climate Change Adaptation Through a Local Lens

This session will bring together key actors from the region that are leading local approaches to climate change adaptation through an inclusivity lens and discuss key insights and opportunities for scale up in the region.

Moderator

- Yusuke Taishi, Regional Team Leader, Global Environmental Finance, UNDP

Speakers:

- Bunroeub Khiev, Gender Specialist, NCDDS, Cambodia
- Daovinh Souphonphacdy, Deputy Director of Climate Change Management Promotion Division, Department of Climate Change, Laos
- Galumalemana Anne Rasmussen, Assistant Chief Executive Officer of Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Samoa

Day Three: 25th March 2021, Thursday

0930-
1045 Hrs.

In Conversation: Climate Solutions and Leaving No One Behind

A dialogue on the power of diverse views and perspectives for shaping climate solutions and building resilient and just societies.

Moderator

- Kavita Naidu, Member, Women & Gender Constituency, UNFCCC

Speakers:

- Jan Kairil Guillermo, Chairman & Founder, LEYTEAM Inc., Philippines
- Joseph Sapati Moeono-Kolio, Head of Pacific, Greenpeace, Samoa
- Ms. Kalyani Raj, Member in Charge, All India Women's Conference, India

1100-
1230 Hrs.

Deep Dive Clinic: Looking Ahead- Inclusive Climate Action Through NDCs

This session will bring together insights from stakeholders to address the different bottlenecks including structural, institutional, and societal barriers and bring a whole of society approach to the implementation of NDCs in the context of the new normal.

In breakout groups, speakers and participants will discuss two main questions focusing on good practices, enablers within the ecosystem and building strategic partnerships. The participants will come back to the plenary to present their key action points.

Moderator:

- Krib Sitathani, Country Coordinator, Climate Promise UNDP

Speakers:

- Ms. Yulia Suryanti, Head of Sub-directorate for Monitoring of Mitigation, Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Indonesia
- Syeda Hadika Jamshaid, Climate Change Specialist, Ministry of Climate Change, Pakistan
- Fan Xing, Assistant Researcher of Department of International Policy Research, China National Center for Climate Change Strategy and International Cooperation, China
- Ugyen Tshomo, Chief Program Officer of the National Commission of Women and Children, Bhutan

**1300-
1345 Hrs.**

Way Forward & Forum Closing

A brief discussion on key takeaways of the forum followed by closing remarks by UNDP.

Moderator:

- Moortaza Jiwanji, Project Manager, Governance for Resilience project, Pacific MC

Speakers:

- Kavita Naidu, Member, Women & Gender Constituency, UNFCCC
- Dr. Saleemul Huq, Executive Director, ICCCAD

Closing Remark by Jaco Cilliers, Manager, Bangkok Regional Hub, UNDP.