



A rapid analysis of the gender intentionality of Africa's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)

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November 2023

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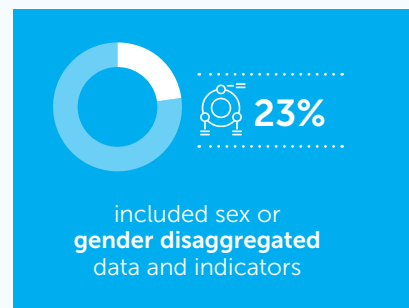
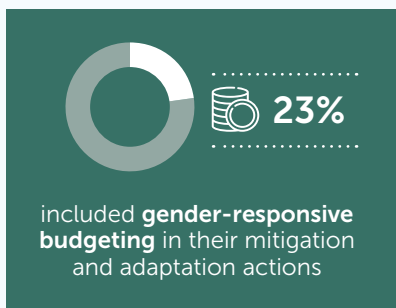
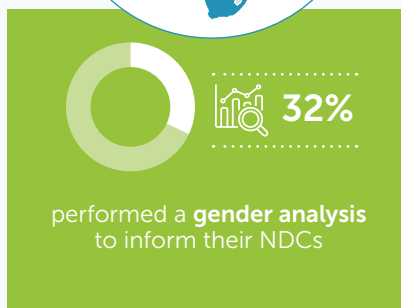
Executive Summary

Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) refer to comprehensive strategies devised by nations to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions and enhance resilience in response to the impacts of climate change. NDCs are important governmental frameworks to Africa’s climate goals, including gender-related ones. This rapid analysis of Africa’s NDCs builds on IUCN’s global report¹ on gender and national climate planning to show specific insights into how gender is integrated in the NDCs of African countries. The paper further investigates mobilisation and allocation of gender-responsive climate finance in Africa and provides recommendations.



A report by the African NDC hub² shows considerable progress on gender intentionality within the updated NDCs. However, this paper shows that more still needs to be done especially on gender analysis, gender-responsive budgeting and data disaggregation by sex.

Of the 31 countries assessed, only:



Gender-responsive budgeting is a strategy that creates budgets that work for everyone. By considering and analysing the unique and diverse needs of every person, gender-responsive budgets strive for a fair distribution of resources.

Source: UN Women (2023). The Explainer: What is gender-responsive budgeting

Gender intentionality is “identifying and understanding gender inequities, gender-based constraints, and inequitable norms and dynamics and taking steps to address them”.

Source: Gates, M. F. (2014). Putting women and girls at the centre of development.

Furthermore, the analysis indicates that mobilising more climate finance has not in turn led to increased gender intentionality in countries’ climate actions. As this paper demonstrates, most African nations that have amassed substantial climate funding did not prioritise gender-responsive budgeting. These include Morocco, South Africa, and Egypt. As African countries work to mobilise more climate finance both locally and internationally, there’s need for them, their financiers, and investors to be more gender intentional. i.e., deliberately apply a gender-lens to their climate finance mobilisation and allocation.

¹ International Union for Conservation of Nature, 2021. Gender and National Climate Planning: Gender integration in the revised Nationally Determined Contributions.

² Africa NDC Hub (2022) Doubling Down on Delivering Africa’s Climate Action Priorities.

Introduction

The 2015 Paris Agreement requires all parties to set NDCs to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change. The plans define how each country will reach its targets and elaborates systems to monitor and verify progress to keep them on track. Therefore, NDCs play a pivotal role in shaping a country's approach to climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Additionally, countries are encouraged to adopt a gender-responsive approach, including appropriate budgeting in their NDC's implementation. For this to be effective, there should be greater intentionality for gender.

Climate change reinforces and exacerbates existing gender inequalities, and those most impacted by the climate crisis are usually the most vulnerable in society, such as women and girls.³ CARE International⁴ reports that gender inequality is a root cause of poverty, and this is compounded by the fact that climate change is making poverty worse. This means that the chances of achieving a better life for many women and girls is threatened by a **double injustice** - climate change and gender inequality.

This paper focuses on the integration of gender strategies into NDCs of 31 African countries (see table 1). It investigates gender intentionality using several dimensions (figure 2), including gender-responsive budgeting in African NDCs. More importantly, the paper explores whether countries are mobilising and allocating climate finance with a gender lens. Lastly, it makes recommendations for governments, financiers, and investors to ensure climate finance is not gender neutral.

Methodology

Sampling

The primary aim of this paper is to assess the degree to which African NDCs adequately account for and incorporate gender into their climate plans. While there have been previous assessments by others on gender integration in the NDCs, this rapid assessment concentrates exclusively on African countries and investigates their financing of gender objectives.

The selection of countries followed a purposive sampling criteria. Given each geographic region has unique vulnerabilities to climate change (see figure 1), countries were selected to ensure representation from the key African regions: North Africa, East Africa, West Africa, Southern Africa and Central Africa.

Secondly, the selection approach considered macro factors, such as population size and GDP levels.

³ UN Women (2022): [Explainer: How gender inequality and climate change are interconnected](#).

⁴ CARE International (2014) [Tackling the Double Injustice of Climate Change and Gender Inequality](#).

⁵ The UN Statistics Division has subdivided the African continent into five regions, Northern Africa, Central, Southern Africa, East Africa, and Western Africa.

Figure 1: Observed climate change and impacts on people across different regions of Africa (IPCC 2022)

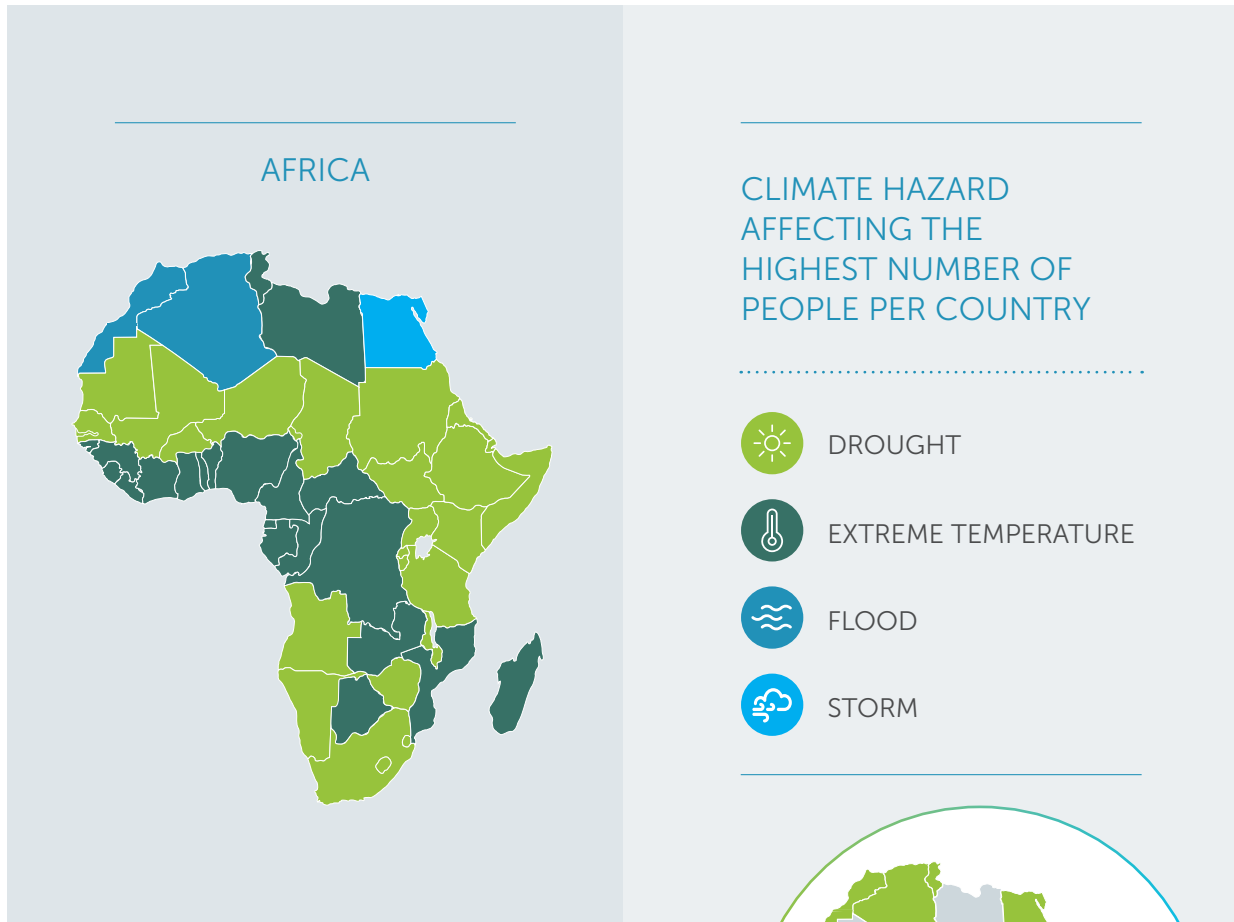


Figure 2: Countries included in the rapid assessment, by region



Assessment criteria



IUCN’s Environment and Gender Information (EGI) framework was applied to an expanded set of countries with a specific focus on Africa. The assessment was conducted on the latest NDCs available for the selected countries.⁶ The EGI criteria starts by analysing the mention of gender and gender related terms in respective NDCs. It then examines whether gender analysis was conducted, and progresses to analyse gender-responsive budgeting, monitoring and evaluation of gender outputs. The assessment framework is elaborated further in Figure 3.

Box 1: EGI methodology

IUCN’s Environment and Gender Information (EGI) methodology is a mixed-methods approach consisting of a quantitative and qualitative content review and analysis, which is used to assess the integration of gender equality and women’s empowerment considerations in environment-focused documents, such as, but not limited to, national or sectoral policies, plans, frameworks and national reports.

Source: IUCN (2021). Gender and national climate planning Gender integration in the revised Nationally Determined Contributions

Figure 3: Assessment Framework applied in this study

 Criteria	 Why does this matter?
The existence of any reference to gender or women in the policy	Signals a first-level awareness of the importance of gender inclusion
Reference to a gender analysis to inform the NDC	The use of gender analysis signals the importance of understanding the national climate context through a gender lens
The existence of gender objectives	Gender objectives elevate attention to gender equality as a strategic priority and steer action
The existence of gender actions and activities	Gender activities in NDCs, show that the gender considerations identified are brought into the implementation level.
The existence of gender responsive budgeting	Indicates an even stronger commitment to gender responsiveness to identify resources necessary for carrying out these activities.
The existence of gender stakeholders as implementing and monitoring agencies	Effective participation from national agencies in these activities can help encourage and sustain the participation of gender stakeholders
The existence of sex-disaggregated and gender indicators to monitor and track progress	Offers a plan to monitor gender gaps experienced by women in the sector and track women’s status in NDC implementation

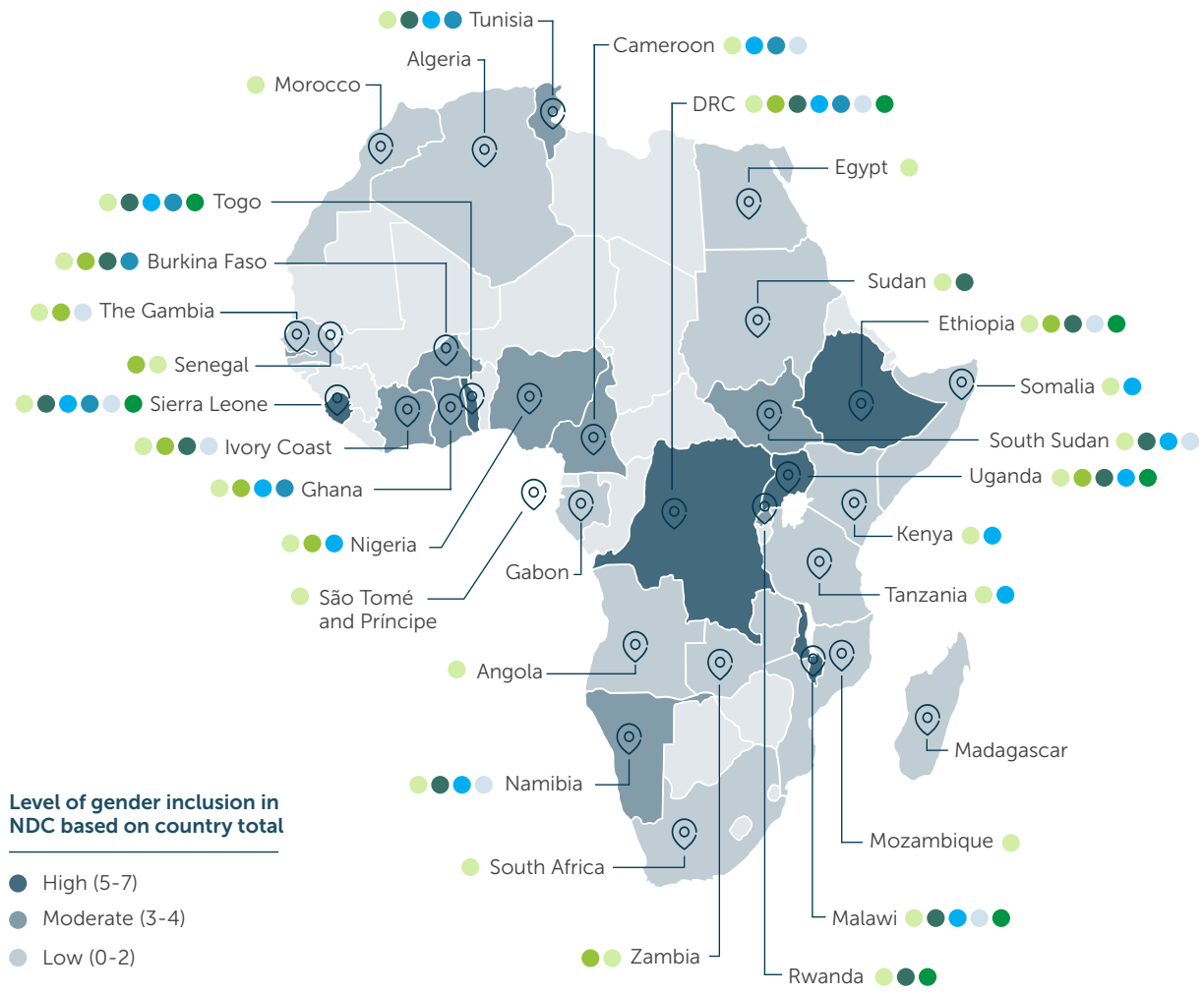
Using the criteria above, this paper ranks NDCs in three categories. NDCs that met at least five conditions of the criteria were ranked as high; NDCs meeting three to four conditions ranked as moderate, and those that met at most two conditions ranked as low.

⁶ Nationally Determined Contributions Registry. <https://unfccc.int/NDCREG>.

Findings

The assessment shows that 48% of the NDCs ranked low in gender inclusion, meaning that they met not more than two of the criteria in the framework. 19% ranked moderate, i.e., met three or four conditions in the criteria. Only 23% of the assessed NDCs ranked high for gender inclusion. Figure 4 below presents a detailed analysis of the findings.

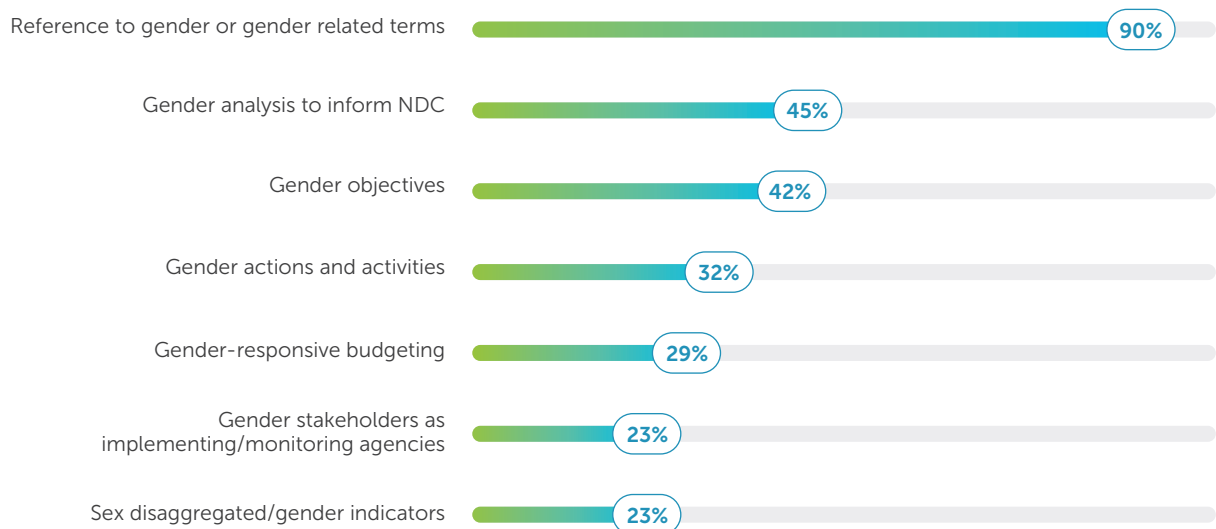
Figure 4: Country NDCs assessed for gender inclusivity



Performance of African NDCs against Gender assessment criteria

This section discusses the performance of African country NDCs against the gender assessment criteria described in figure 2. It also highlights specific examples demonstrating how countries incorporate gender in their NDCs.

Figure 3: Distribution of NDCs against gender assessment criteria



CRITERIA 1-4 REFERENCE TO GENDER, PERFORMANCE OF GENDER ANALYSIS, GENDER OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

There was a higher proportion of NDCs meeting the first four criteria of the assessment framework as shown in Figure 3. **Almost all countries (90%) mentioned gender or gender related terms in their NDCs. However, only 32% of the countries performed a gender analysis to inform their NDCs.** This includes the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) which refers to an analysis of gender and indigenous people in the development and implementation of adaptation measures to inform their updated NDC.

42% of the NDCs included gender objectives; and 45% stipulated gender actions and activities within their mitigation and adaptation priority actions. Kenya, Cameroon, Ghana, Namibia are some examples of countries with clear gender action and measures in their NDCs. Namibia, for instance, has committed to ensure the active participation of women in discussions pertaining to climate change adaptation and mitigation, policy development, and decision-making across all administrative levels to promote sustainable tourism. Ghana has designated the development of livelihood opportunities and the reinforcement of resilience in climate-vulnerable agricultural landscapes and food systems for women and youth.

⁷ Coherent with IUCN Gender and national climate planning Gender integration in the revised Nationally Determined Contribution which found that 94% of African NDCs included gender considerations.



CRITERIA 5-6 GENDER STAKEHOLDERS AND SEX DISAGGREGATED DATA

There was a lower distribution of NDCs that met the last three criteria (Figure 3) of the assessment framework. **29% of NDCs outlined stakeholders responsible for either implementation or monitoring of gender activities mostly citing public bodies, non-governmental organisations, or civil society organisations.** For example, in Malawi, the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare is the focal point to ensure the promotion of gender mainstreaming in policies, programmes and projects outlined in the NDC. **Only 23% of NDCs assessed included sex or gender disaggregated data and indicators.** In Uganda, the number of people trained on climate change disaggregated by gender is listed as an indicator under priority adaptation actions for the Education sector.



CRITERIA 7 GENDER-RESPONSIVE BUDGETING

The sampled African NDCs performed poorly when assessed for Gender-responsive budgeting. **Only 23% (less than eight) of the NDCs include gender-responsive budgeting in their mitigation and adaptation actions.** Boxes 2 and 3 illustrate examples of gender-responsive budgeting from DRC and Tunisia's NDCs.

Box 2: DRC

In DRC, approximately USD 2.3 billion is budgeted for the implementation of gender related climate change adaptation actions.

Key gender actions are highlighted below:

- ✓ Capacity building for women's empowerment
- ✓ Implementation of the early warning system for women in subsistence farming.
- ✓ Strengthening the resilience of vulnerable populations (women and children).
- ✓ Integration of the gender approach into climate change issues.
- ✓ Strengthening human and institutional capacities and facilitating access to basic health services for vulnerable populations

Source: Government of Democratic Republic of Congo. (2021). Updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC).

Box 3: Tunisia

In Tunisia, gender actions are covered under priority adaptation actions for Social Resilience with a proposed budget of USD 1.5 Million.

Some of the gender priorities include:

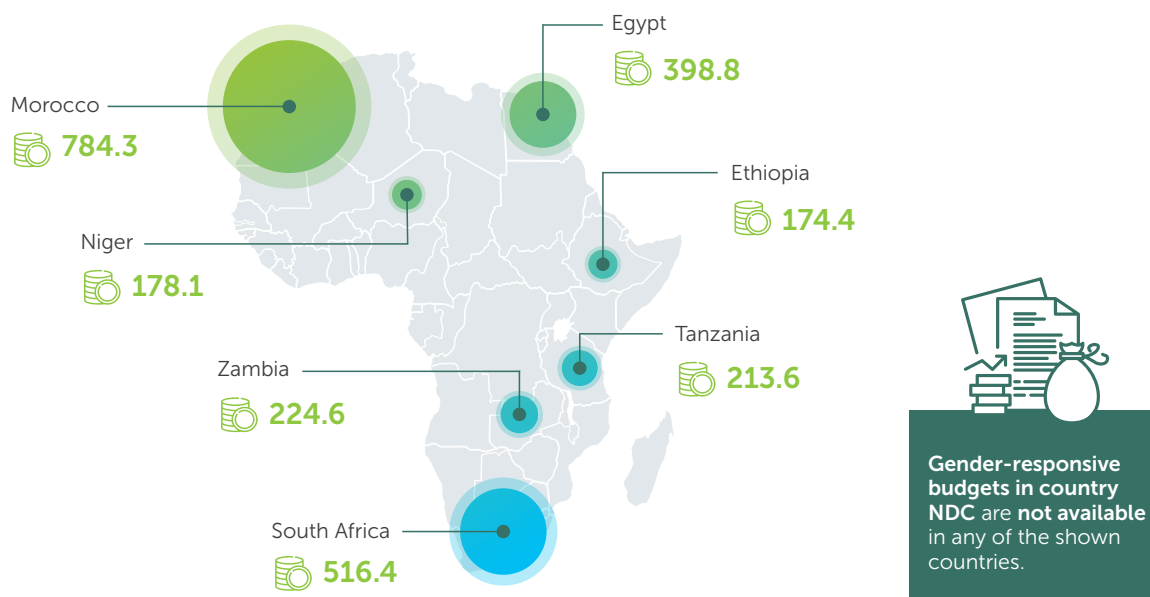
- ✓ Endorse the national policy on gender mainstreaming and the fight against climate change.
- ✓ Position gender as a driving force in Tunisian agricultural policy.
- ✓ Ensure gender justice in water resilience policy.
- ✓ Operationalize women's full participation in policies and areas of natural disaster resilience and climate-related risk reduction.
- ✓ Recognize and scale up the role of women in the preservation of ecosystems.
- ✓ Integrate an inclusive and systemic approach to gender in health policy.
- ✓ Position women, youth, and local action groups at the centre of the development of alternative and sustainable tourism offerings.

Source: Government of Tunisia. (2021). Updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC).

Zooming in on gender-responsive climate finance in Africa

Findings paint a grim picture of gender-responsive climate budgeting in Africa's NDCs. As already highlighted, only 23% (fewer than eight) of the NDCs included gender-responsive budgeting in their adaptation and mitigation actions. A scoping study by the AfDB revealed that the top recipients of climate finance include Morocco, South Africa, and Tanzania.⁸ Despite their ability to mobilise large sums of climate funding, our analysis found that all these countries do not prioritise gender-responsive budgeting. More in the figure below.

Figure 5: Countries with highest climate finance mobilisation levels⁹ and performance on gender-responsive budgeting (in USD million)



The Climate Policy Initiative (CPI) reports that tracking climate finance with a gender lens is an emerging activity among African public institutions.¹⁰ According to CPI data, 32% of total climate finance was tagged for gender equality, of which only 19% was gender-responsive.¹¹

Private climate finance, which is very key for NDC implementation, remains concentrated in the energy sector at 74%, while agriculture, forestry, and other land use (AFOLU) sector attracted only 7% of climate finance.¹² The failure to consider gender when allocating climate finance has contributed to the persistence of women being left behind - research indicates that female participation is highest in low-growth sectors (e.g., agriculture) and lowest in high-growth sectors (e.g., energy).^{13,14}


⁸ AfDB (2021). NDC implementation in Africa through green investments by private sector.
⁹ Ibid.
¹⁰ Climate Policy Initiative (2022). Landscape of Climate Finance in Africa.
¹¹ Gender tagging (labelling and tracking) is the process of designating a project/intervention as gendered in some way.
¹² AFDB (2021). NDCs implementation in Africa through green investments by private sector.
¹³ AfDB and UN for Women 2021, Green Jobs for Women in Africa.
¹⁴ IUCN (2019): Energizing Equality. Unlocking the potential of women's participation in sub-Saharan African energy utilities.

Call to action for gender-responsive climate finance

The moment has come for Africa's climate policy to include gender in its entirety. African countries should do more than just mention gender in their NDCs; they should analyse gender gaps, integrate gender specific programmes and allocate sufficient budgets to gender programming. With the UN Climate Change Conference (COP28) and the highly anticipated first-ever global stocktake fast approaching, this is a unique and timely opportunity for African countries to reflect on key gaps articulated in this paper, and work towards accelerating gender-responsive climate finance actions.

Furthermore, gender has to be integrated in important commitments such as "The African Leaders Nairobi Declaration on Climate Change and Call to Action". Despite the declaration's significance as a financing mechanism to restructure Africa's crippling debt and unlock climate funding, gender equality was only addressed in two of the declaration's 69 articles. Moreover, gender was only referenced in programmes where women have traditionally been viewed as beneficiaries and not as agents of change, stakeholders, or leaders. Gender-blind commitments of this nature contribute to the ongoing exclusion of women.

Investors and financiers of climate initiatives should prioritise and incentivise for gender-tagged and gender-responsive climate finance commitments. This could be done by providing clear guidance on the concept of 'gender-intentional climate action', giving greater consideration for gender-responsive investments, and ensuring granular project-level reporting by all actors to assess the progress of gender-related climate actions. Also, the integration of gender-responsive budget tagging and climate budget tagging has the potential to enhance reporting efficiencies and foster more fruitful synergies.



**Climate change is not gender neutral,
neither is climate finance.**



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