



**TAKING STOCK:**  
**SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE  
HEALTH AND RIGHTS**  
**in CLIMATE**  
**COMMITMENTS**



**A LATIN AMERICA AND  
THE CARIBBEAN REVIEW**

Sexual and reproductive health and rights and rights-based approaches in national climate documents: **A review of Nationally Determined Contributions since 2020 in Latin America and the Caribbean**



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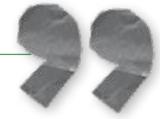


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# FOREWORD



With rising temperatures, extreme weather events, sea level rise, food insecurity and droughts, Latin America and the Caribbean is one of the regions most challenged by a changing climate.

Climate change poses significant threats to our environment and economies. It also exacerbates existing inequalities, particularly affecting the health and well-being of women and girls. Despite economic growth and social progress, wide income and social disparities across populations persist. These inequalities are reflected in sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) outcomes, including high maternal mortality rates, adolescent pregnancy and gender-based violence (GBV). The adverse impacts on maternal and newborn health, along with the loss of livelihoods and increased poverty and food insecurity, create conditions of vulnerability that further increase the risk of GBV and harmful practices such as child marriage.

Region-specific interventions that prioritize people's needs should be made to address the underlying structures and vulnerabilities exacerbated by climate change. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), in collaboration with Queen Mary University of London, commissioned this report, which provides valuable insights into the integration of SRHR, GBV and related themes into our region's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). The NDCs, submitted by signatories of the Paris Agreement, offer opportunities for transformative shifts towards a more sustainable future, emphasizing social inclusion and addressing the disproportionate impacts of climate change on women and girls.

The study's findings shed light on the crucial intersection between climate change and SRHR and GBV, offering a platform for dialogue and action at global, regional, national and local levels. By identifying gaps, opportunities and best practices, we can foster more meaningful inclusion of SRHR in climate policy. The report emphasizes the importance of strengthening the evidence base for the impacts of climate change on SRHR and GBV, integrating costed interventions across sectors and scaling up gender-transformative climate action. Furthermore, it calls for the inclusion and representation of vulnerable groups, particularly people of diverse gender identity, youth, persons with disabilities, people of African descent and Indigenous peoples, in climate policy development and implementation.



Taking an intersectional approach, we must recognize the structural drivers of inequality and discrimination that intersect with climate change impacts. This includes strengthening anticipatory actions for disasters, ensuring SRHR and GBV service provision and prioritizing vulnerable groups. The report also underscores the critical need for disaggregated data on climate impacts, encompassing both slow- and sudden-onset events, to better understand the differentiated impacts on various population segments and guide targeted interventions. We must also base our climate policies on human rights, reflecting the principles of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Programme of Action, which safeguard the rights of women, children, refugees, displaced persons and persons with disabilities throughout the climate policy process.

Rising to the challenge of climate change requires a collective effort and a multidimensional approach.

I sincerely hope that this report serves as a catalyst for meaningful change in Latin America and the Caribbean. By working together, we can address the impacts of climate change, promote gender equality, protect the rights of all individuals and build a sustainable and inclusive future.

*Susana Sottoli*

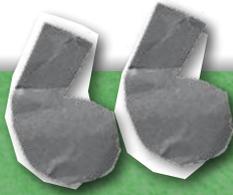
**Susana Sottoli**

**Regional Director, UNFPA Latin America and the Caribbean**



## Abbreviations

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| <b>ACE</b>      | Action for Climate Empowerment  |
| <b>COP</b>      | Conference of the Parties   |
| <b>GAP</b>      | Gender action plan  |
| <b>GBV</b>      | Gender-based violence   |
| <b>ICPD</b>     | International Conference on Population and Development                        |
| <b>IPCC</b>     | Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change                                     |
| <b>LAC</b>      | Latin America and the Caribbean   |
| <b>LGBTQIA+</b> | Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, intersex, asexual and more              |
| <b>NAP</b>      | National adaptation plan  |
| <b>NDC</b>      | Nationally Determined Contribution  |
| <b>NGCCFP</b>   | National Gender and Climate Change Focal Point                                |
| <b>SIDS</b>     | Small Island Developing States  |
| <b>SOGIESC</b>  | Sexual orientation, gender identity and expression<br>and sex characteristics |
| <b>SRHR</b>     | Sexual and reproductive health and rights                                     |
| <b>UNFCCC</b>   | United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change                         |
| <b>UNFPA</b>    | United Nations Population Fund  |
| <b>WMO</b>      | World Meteorological Organization   |



The unprecedented emergencies of the climate crisis, pollution, desertification and biodiversity loss, coupled with the COVID-19 pandemic, and the impact of new and ongoing conflicts, have accelerated and intensified into widespread and interlinked crises that affect us all.

### **BUT NOT EQUALLY.**

Everywhere, women and girls face the greatest threats and the deepest harm. Everywhere, women and girls are taking action to confront the climate and environmental crises. And everywhere, women and girls continue to be largely excluded from the rooms where decisions are taken.



ANTÓNIO GUTERRES,  
UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY-GENERAL



# INTRODUCTION



## Climate change has lasting impacts on human health and disproportionately affects women and girls.

Women, girls and marginalized groups who are largely dependent on natural resources for livelihoods are among the hardest hit by extreme weather patterns. These weather patterns limit their access to food, water, shelter, education and access to essential health services, including those that address sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), gender-based violence (GBV) and preventing harmful practices such as child marriage and female genital mutilation.

Emerging evidence shows the direct and indirect impacts of climate change on women, girls and marginalized groups and their SRHR as well as on GBV and harmful practices. A number of studies find that heat has an adverse impact on maternal and newborn health outcomes, increasing the risk of still-birth (Kuehn and McCormick, 2017; Rylander, Odland and Sandanger, 2013; Olson and Metz, 2020; Poursafa, Keikha and Kelishadi, 2015; Cil and Cameron, 2017; Pacheco, 2020; Yüzen and others, 2023). Additionally, increased poverty and food insecurity driven by climate-related loss of livelihoods are impacting maternal health (IPCC, 2014). Air pollution (Bekkar and others, 2020), climate-related diseases and food insecurity also have adverse impacts on maternal and neonatal health outcomes, which can be more severe for populations facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination.

A clear example of how extreme events disrupt SRHR came in the aftermath of the 2010 Haiti earthquake, where women experienced an increased unmet need for family planning and a reduced ability to negotiate condom use in their partnerships.

Climate-related emergencies cause major disruptions in access to health services and life-saving commodities, including contraception (IPAS, 2022). The challenge climate change poses around access to SRHR services will be keenly felt by those who already face discrimination and marginalization (e.g. women, adolescents and youth, LGBTQIA+ adolescents and youth, migrants, internally displaced persons (IDPs), Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, coastal and rural populations), and in areas where access to services may already be limited (e.g. humanitarian settings and areas affected by conflict).

The risks of GBV and child marriage are known to increase in times of stress and scarcity and following extreme weather events and disasters (McLeod, Barr and Rall, 2019; Pope and others, 2022), and climate change exacerbates the drivers of child marriage. GBV is a violation of human rights and has long-lasting impacts, including limiting women's ability to build resilience to climate change, impeding the capacity of survivors and their dependents to proactively and positively respond to and manage ongoing challenges and crises (Le Masson and others, 2019).



Additionally, climate-related loss or change of livelihoods, as well as displacement and migration, increase risks of GBV and harmful practices, including child marriage and female genital mutilation (Ahmed, Haq and Bartiaux, 2019; McLeod, Barr and Rall, 2019; Pope and others, 2022).

Failing to support the achievement of the full range of SRHR and prevention of GBV and harmful practices will hamper women's and girls' capacity to engage in climate action and policymaking and has direct implications for the achievement of human-centred sustainable development as outlined in the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Programme of Action and reinforced by the Nairobi Summit on

ICPD25. Gaps in the realization of SRHR can prevent women and girls from pursuing education, hinder livelihoods and reduce their ability to participate in household and community decision-making. Girls forced to marry before completing their education – and those denied access to education, literacy and public life – may experience limited ability to receive and act on climate information and alerts from disaster early warning systems. The realization of SRHR and the right to be free from violence, particularly for those already facing discrimination, can empower people to exercise their agency and engage in climate action. For those affected by intersecting inequalities, realizing SRHR can allow marginalized groups' needs and priorities to be represented in climate action and policy processes.



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Photo: © UN PHOTO/Logan Abassi

The recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report found that “the vulnerability of ecosystems and people to climate change differs substantially among and within regions [...] driven by patterns of intersecting socioeconomic development” and other structural inequalities (IPCC, 2022). These ongoing patterns of inequity are affecting women, girls and marginalized groups disproportionately. It also recognizes that the current efforts to reduce global emissions need to be accompanied by scaled-up adaptation actions that aim

at strengthening resilience at the local, national and global levels to support women, girls and the most vulnerable groups from the inevitable impacts of climate change.

Recent reviews of the inclusion of SRHR and gender issues in Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) documents, including a review conducted by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) with Queen Mary University of London in 2021, identified significant gaps in national adaptation response and financing in critical sectors, such as health systems, protection systems and disaster risk reduction plans (McMullen and others, 2021). The report found that even where gender dimensions are incorporated and elaborated in the national climate documents, they lack clear adaptation actions and require resources as well as monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to ensure successful implementation. The review identified important gaps in the national climate policy integration of SRHR and GBV issues and in the identification of gender-transformative approaches that address the root causes of inequalities in various contexts.

Reviewing national climate policies, including the NDCs, and exploring and addressing gaps related to SRHR and GBV are critical to ensuring no one is left behind. It is essential to engage on SRHR and recognize that it includes some of the most stigmatized, deprioritized, yet fundamental dimensions of life, where we often see an acute concentration of multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. If the climate crisis is a crisis of inequality, SRHR represents a key intersection in need of attention and investment. This is essential to building a better and more equal world.



UNFPA has committed to three transformative results by 2030: (1) ending preventable maternal deaths; (2) ending unmet need for family planning; and (3) ending GBV and harmful practices. The rapid pace of climate change over this decade will make each of these transformative results more difficult to achieve. UNFPA supports governments to ensure the incorporation of SRHR and GBV issues in the design of national climate policies and solutions, with women, young people and vulnerable groups at the heart of developing innovative solutions to improve climate resilience. This regional overview of references related to SRHR, GBV and harmful practices, health, gender, youth, human rights and population dynamics will provide an insight into the needs, priorities and gaps of the countries on SRHR in climate policies and supports cross-country learning. This knowledge supports greater inclusion, representation and action for disproportionately affected groups.

## The impacts of climate change in Latin America and the Caribbean

The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) report released in July 2022 detailed the extreme weather and climate change impacts, including megadrought, extreme rainfall, land and marine heatwaves and glacier melts in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), and their wide-reaching consequences for ecosystems, food and water security, human health and poverty (WMO, 2021). The region is among the most challenged by extreme hydrometeorological events and the impacts span the entire region – from the Amazon to the Andes and from the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans to the snowy peaks of Patagonia – with the IPCC noting that 613 extreme climate and hydrometeorological events occurred between 2000 and 2013 in the LAC region.

Impacts from hurricanes Eta and Iota, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, contributed to a total of 7.7 million people in Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua experiencing high levels of food insecurity in 2021 (WMO, 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic has had direct impacts on vital health, including sexual and reproductive health, and is widening inequalities. Socioeconomic impacts are significant and growing, undermining individual and community resilience and resources to cope with expected climate changes.

The years from 2015 to 2021 were the seven warmest years on record around the globe (WMO, 2021). LAC witnessed an average rate of temperature increase of around 0.2°C per decade between 1991 and 2021, compared to 0.1°C per decade between 1961 and 1990. The year 2021 also saw extreme rainfall, which led to floods and landslides with vast numbers of fatalities, damaged or destroyed homes and displaced persons. Within the LAC region, the Andes, northeast Brazil and the northern countries of Central America were highlighted as among the most sensitive regions to climate-related migrations and displacements. The region is also home to several Small Island Developing States (SIDS) that are particularly vulnerable to climate impacts, often enduring the most loss and damage inflicted by climate change.



In 2017, Hurricane Maria caused damages in Dominica totalling more than 225 per cent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP), and displaced about 60 per cent of the population of Barbuda (ACAPS, 2018). Such disasters make it harder for SIDS to allocate resources and finances to sustainable development, and increase their vulnerability to other climate impacts.

Glaciers in the tropical Andes have lost more than 30 per cent of their area since the 1980s, with some glaciers in Peru having lost more than 50 per cent of their area. The consequence of these disappearing glaciers is an increased risk of water insecurity for the Andean population and ecosystem. However, at the forefront of the region's water crisis is the Central Chile mega-drought, which is currently in its thirteenth year and constitutes the longest drought in the region for at least 1,000 years.

Sea levels in LAC have continued to rise at a rate faster than the global average, with highest recorded levels along the Atlantic coast of South America south of the Equator at 3.52 mm per year from 1993 to 2021 (WMO, 2021). As a large proportion of the population in LAC, particularly those inhabiting SIDS, live on the coast, such rises increase the vulnerability of coastal populations to storm surges, inundation of low-lying areas and the contamination of freshwater aquifers.

LAC is home to one of the world's most important terrestrial carbon reserves, the Amazon basin, which represents about 57 per cent of the world's remaining primary forests and stores an estimated 104 gigatons of carbon (WMO, 2021). The rate of deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon rainforest is therefore of great concern. Deforestation doubled in 2021 compared to the 2009–2018 average, reaching its highest level since 2009. In total, 22 per cent more forest area was lost in 2021 compared to 2020, with far-reaching

consequences, including loss of animal and plant species habitats, disturbance of the water cycle and disruption to the carbon cycle through release of, and inability to absorb, carbon (ECLAC, 2021). In South and Central America, climate change impacts are not of equal scope for men and women. Women, particularly the poorest, are more vulnerable, have less adaptive capacity and are impacted to a greater extent, further widening structural gender gaps (Castellanos and others, 2022).

## Sexual and reproductive health and rights, gender-based violence and harmful practices in Latin America and the Caribbean

Despite recent economic growth and social progress, LAC is still characterized by wide income and social inequalities, with 29 per cent of the population living below the poverty line and 40 per cent of the poorest receiving less than 15 per cent of the total income (PAHO and WHO, 2012). Although some indicators of reproductive and maternal health are improving, such as infant mortality rate, which halved between 1980 and 2021 to 27 per 1,000 live births, these estimates obscure differences in progress within and between countries (PAHO and WHO, 2012). For example, infant mortality rate varies from 35 deaths per 1,000 live births in Guyana in 2009 to 58 in the Plurinational State of Bolivia in 2008 to 64 in Haiti in 2012. An analysis of SRHR indicators from demographic health surveys and multiple cluster surveys found that sizeable inequalities among the rich and poor persist in most LAC countries, with neonatal and children-under-five mortality and stunting highest among the poorest populations (Restrepo-Méndez and others, 2015). Overall, the poorest 20 per cent of women and children are lagging behind in most countries in the region.



Ending preventable maternal deaths is the first transformative result for UNFPA to achieve by 2030. Although the maternal mortality ratio (the number of maternal deaths per 100,000 live births) in LAC has declined significantly in recent years from 88 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2005 to 74 in 2017, representing a reduction of 15.9 per cent, there are vast differences within and between countries. In 2022 the maternal mortality ratio for the region stood at 88 per 100,000 live births (WHO, 2023). The three countries with the highest maternal mortality ratio are Haiti at 350, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela at 259 and the Plurinational State of Bolivia at 161. Moreover, between 2016 and 2020, maternal mortality increased by 15 per cent, nearly eradicating gains made since 2005. A similar reversal is reflected in the annual rate of reduction in maternal mortality at the national level. Further, COVID-19 has had significant impacts, causing a 20-year setback in maternal health. In 2020, there was an upward trend in maternal mortality indicators

in the region compared to the previous year as a result of restrictions to reproductive health services during the pandemic (ECLAC, 2022).

Adolescent pregnancy has profound impacts on the life trajectories of girls. It hampers their psychosocial development, contributes to poor health outcomes for them and their children, negatively impacts their educational and employment opportunities and contributes to the perpetuation of intergenerational cycles of poor health and poverty. Adolescent birth rates in LAC are the second highest in the world, with major inequities within and between countries. Furthermore, the vast majority of abortions result from unintended pregnancies, of which LAC has the highest rate globally, at 96 per 1,000 (Guttmacher Institute, 2018). Since 1996, according to the ICPD, LAC has achieved a steady decrease in the unmet need for family planning for both married and unmarried women. Haiti remains the country with the highest unmet need, followed by Costa Rica, the Plurinational State of Bolivia and Panama.





Photo: © UNFPA Latin America and the Caribbean

According to the Guttmacher Institute, 24 million women in LAC want to avoid pregnancy but are not using a modern contraceptive method (Guttmacher Institute, 2022). This needs to be addressed to meet the second transformative result of ending unmet need for family planning. Between 2001 and 2021, the highest rate of reduction in unwanted pregnancy was observed in Guatemala, declining by 7 per cent from 16 per cent in 2001 to 9 per cent in 2021. The Plurinational State of Bolivia and Chile both saw an annual reduction of 4 per cent over the same period. Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Mexico and Panama all experienced a 1–2 per cent increase in unwanted pregnancy over the same period. UNFPA presented a scenario that considered the decline in procurement in the private sector and the shortages and reduced demand in the public sector caused by the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the provision of sexual and reproductive health services.



The study found that 1.7 million unintended pregnancies, nearly 800,000 abortions and almost 3,000 maternal deaths were to be expected (UNFPA, 2022).

The levels of coverage with the methods procured by the government through public SRHR programmes are still very low because public provision programmes in the region have not achieved universal coverage. The other limitation is the range of sales prices. Access is affected by the high burden of out-of-pocket spending. Poor women are spending proportionally more than rich women on contraceptives. The wide range in the price of contraceptives is another factor affecting levels of coverage. Overall, unmet need is expected to remain constant or increase in coming years. Indigenous peoples, people of African descent, persons with disabilities and people of diverse sexual orientation, gender identity and expression and sex characteristics (SOGIESC) living in rural areas are often marginalized and face greater barriers in accessing services and justice.

Adolescent SRHR is a major area of concern and in need of attention in LAC. Multiple intersecting individual, relational and societal factors of adolescents can contribute to increased vulnerability and decreased access to information, commodities and services, including contraceptives and abortion. Fertility in the 15–19 year age group in LAC has witnessed the slowest decline of all regions in the world (Santelli and others, 2017), with girls from families in the lowest wealth quintile, those with lower levels of education and those from Indigenous communities or communities of African descent disproportionately affected by adolescent pregnancy (PAHO and others, 2020). The global adolescent pregnancy rate is estimated at 46 births per 1,000 girls, while adolescent pregnancy rates in the LAC region continue to be the second highest in the world, estimated at 66.5 births per 1,000 girls aged 15-19 years, second only to sub-Saharan Africa (PAHO and others, 2017).



The countries with the highest rates in Central America are Guatemala, Nicaragua and Panama; the Dominican Republic and Guyana in the Caribbean; and the Plurinational State of Bolivia and Venezuela in South America. Furthermore, the LAC region is the only region globally where the number of girls under 15 giving birth continues to rise (UNFPA, 2013), which is of real concern as girls under 15 are four times more likely to die during pregnancy or childbirth than an adult woman (Center for Reproductive Rights, 2022). Enabling access to high-quality comprehensive SRHR and GBV services for adolescents ensures they can achieve bodily autonomy and exercise their capacity to make decisions about their bodies, personal lives and futures.

Ending GBV and harmful practices including child marriage is another area that requires effort and attention in LAC. LAC has some of the highest rates of GBV in the world, with current estimates of either intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence against women ranging from 24 per cent in southern LAC and 41 per cent in the Andean region, higher than the global estimated average of 35 per cent (WHO, 2013). The prevalence of child marriage and early unions in the region is above the global average. Child marriage in LAC most often takes the form of an informal union rather than a formal marriage. In the region, 21 per cent of women joined or married before the age of 18, and 4 per cent before the age of 15. The highest rates of child marriage are in Suriname (36 per cent), Nicaragua (35 per cent), Belize (34 per cent), Honduras (34 per cent), the Dominican Republic (30 per cent), Guatemala (30 per cent), Guyana (30 per cent), Brazil (26 per cent), El Salvador (26 per cent) and Panama (26 per cent). LAC is the only region in the world where the prevalence of child marriage has not decreased in the past 25 years, with one in four young women first married or in a union before their eighteenth birthday (UNICEF, 2019).



There are stark intraregional differences in the prevalence of child marriage, from less than 10 per cent in Jamaica to more than 30 per cent in Belize, the Dominican Republic, Honduras and Nicaragua. Furthermore, child brides in the region are more likely to live in rural areas and poor households and have lower levels of education.

## Climate action and the Nationally Determined Contributions

In 2016, 196 countries adopted the Paris Agreement, a legally binding agreement adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) that sets a target of keeping the rise in global temperature in the twenty-first century below 2°C and to pursue efforts to limit it further to 1.5°C. As signatories, each country is required to prepare, communicate and maintain NDCs. Submitted every five years, NDCs are a key national climate policy document and include a description of how a country will work to mitigate and adapt to climate change in their territory. They lay out actions to address climate challenges at the national level and usually include sections on actions to mitigate the impacts of climate change through emission reduction as well as chapters on actions to strengthen the resilience to climate change of individuals, communities or systems through adaptation actions. In 2020 and 2021, countries submitted the second round of NDCs showing progress from earlier NDCs, reflecting the highest possible ambition for each country, and including plans for monitoring and evaluation. Another round of NDC submissions will take place in 2025. As NDCs are required by all nations who are signatories to the Paris Agreement, they provide the ability to gain an overview of climate plans and challenges in each territory and an indication of levels of ambition over time, and allow for cross-country and regional comparison.



## METHODOLOGY



This report relays the findings of an analysis of the inclusion of SRHR and related thematic areas in NDCs from LAC countries published in and after 2020.

It adopts the broad definition of SRHR set out in the Guttmacher-*Lancet* report of 2018 (Guttmacher-*Lancet* Commission, 2018), which describes SRHR as a set of rights and essential services that meet public health and human rights standards. This package includes GBV. The review accounted for any references to SRHR and GBV and harmful practices, but also explored five other SRHR-related thematic areas: (1) health; (2) gender; (3) human rights, participation and vulnerable groups; (4) youth; and (5) population dynamics. These thematic areas may serve as important entry points for strengthening SRHR in climate action and achieving rights-based and gender-transformative change. These five related thematic areas were included in this review as they intersect with women's health and rights issues by nature of their definition and content and are relevant to addressing the unequal and disproportionate impacts of climate change on particular groups.

The research team reviewed references to **health** as health is core to SRHR and a component of the well-being of women and girls as it relates to their experience of violence, and because unequal access to and achievement of good health are also issues of justice and inequality. We reviewed references to **gender** as gender mainstreaming and participation

are key in achieving gender equality and access to SRHR services, including access to services for people with diverse SOGIESC. In addition, we analysed any reference or considerations for **human rights**, as the realization of SRHR and the right to be free from violence requires human rights-based approaches, which means that all forms of discrimination must be prohibited, prevented and eliminated. In this context, we also reviewed to what extent vulnerable groups were acknowledged or included in the NDCs. We reviewed any references to participation, empowerment and meaningful inclusion of **youth** due to their critical role as agents of change for SRHR in climate action. Finally, we included any references to **population dynamics** such as population size, migration and urbanization and assessed if these were presented in alignment with the human rights-based principles set out in the ICPD Programme of Action.

This systematic process of content analysis of SRHR and GBV and harmful practices and the five thematic areas was performed for each NDC, using the method developed for the review of 50 NDCs submitted before 2020 (McMullen and others, 2021). The content analysis was conducted in three stages. In the first stage, references to all five thematic areas were gathered from each NDC into a spreadsheet.



In the second stage, content specific to thematic areas was grouped together to identify the range of concerns or ambitions identified across countries in relation to the theme, i.e. health or gender. Finally, a country and cross-country analysis was undertaken to identify gaps and good practices in the NDCs in relation to each thematic area.

The content analysis focused on the extent to which the thematic areas were included in the NDC report. References to the thematic areas in the analysis may appear as part of a contextual aspect in the country's situational analysis, the acknowledgement of the impacts of climate change on that specific dimension or the provision of a policy or intervention response.

The UNFPA LAC region comprises 41 countries. However, during the analysis conducted in August 2022, only NDCs from 26 countries were reviewed. Countries that did not have an NDC or update a published NDC in or after 2020 were not included in the analysis. Therefore, the findings and conclusions of the analysis are based on the NDCs or updates submitted by the 26 countries within the specified time frame. See appendix 1 for a full list of countries and versions of NDCs included for review.

To ensure the inclusion of perspectives from young people, UNFPA selected six young people who were members of either the UNFPA Joint Youth Working Group on SRHR and Climate Change or YOUNGO (the youth constituency to UNFCCC) and were experienced in the NDC or similar development processes. The young people selected are based in the five regions where UNFPA works. The young people from LAC produced short reports providing their perspective on the NDCs and the climate crisis in their region as well as a reflection on how climate change impacts SRHR. These perspectives are presented in the Youth Report section of this publication (see pages 32–36).

The results of this report will provide an opening for dialogue at regional, national and local levels in LAC on the ways that climate change and SRHR and GBV intersect and identify entry points for climate action, highlighting gaps as well as opportunities and best practices to allow for greater and more meaningful inclusion of aspects of SRHR and GBV in climate policy. This includes identifying and focusing on region-specific entry points in national climate actions to ensure no one is left behind and address underlying patterns of vulnerability and inequalities.

## Limitations

NDCs relay a nation's priority actions in responding to climate change and are limited in their ability to unpack specific sectoral actions. Related national climate policy documents will contain more detailed action related to the thematic areas described in this report. Readers are encouraged to keep this in mind when reading the report. Not all countries have submitted an NDC since 2020. For those countries that submitted their first NDC before 2020, an updated NDC was included in the analysis. As we included only the most recent NDC submitted in or after 2020, it is possible that some information included in the first NDC may not have been relayed into the updated, second or interim NDC, and therefore have not been included in the analysis. Furthermore, many other documents relevant to SRHR and GBV were not included in the analysis, such as other national climate policies or gender action plans (GAPs), which are commonly referenced in NDCs, and therefore our analysis is limited to the information included in the NDC.



## KEY FINDINGS BY THEMATIC AREA

The climate emergency imperils progress towards all our global goals, including achieving sexual and reproductive health and rights for all. Shifting temperatures and other climate consequences may lead to pregnancy losses or low birth weight. Natural disasters often disrupt provision of contraceptive services, which can lead to an increase in unintended pregnancies. Climate-induced disasters can also upend programmes to respond to gender-based violence, and where people are displaced, child marriages and other harmful practices also tend to rise.

DR. NATALIA KANEM,  
UNFPA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## Sexual and reproductive health and rights, gender-based violence and harmful practices

The review of the 26 NDCs found that 10 include issues related to SRHR and GBV. These are the NDCs of Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Costa Rica, Dominica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. Specifically, Panama, Paraguay and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela referenced maternal and newborn health, while Belize, Dominica, Mexico and Panama mention other SRHR issues. Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Paraguay and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela all elaborate on specific interventions to address SRHR. Antigua and Barbuda, the Dominican Republic and El Salvador are the only countries that refer to GBV. No references to harmful practices were found.

## Maternal and newborn health

Maternal and newborn health is the most common mention of SRHR in the NDCs. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela references the reconversion of a maternal and child hospital in Caricuao as part of the National Plan for the Progressive Elimination of Ozone-Depleting Substances (the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela NDC, 2021: pp. 70–71). Paraguay describes an adaptation measure goal for 2030 to drive capacity building for family health units as a response to emergencies associated with extreme weather and climate events, although it provides no detail on the scope of services provided by such units (Paraguay NDC, 2021: p. 51). Panama describes maternal and newborn health in relation to the current state of health in the country, with references to gender-based inequalities in reproductive health and the rate of women dying from pregnancy-related causes. It is also the only country to mention an aspect of adolescent health, the adolescent birth rate (Panama NDC, 2020: p. 23).



**FIGURE 1:** Number of Nationally Determined Contributions that integrate sexual and reproductive health and rights and gender-based violence issues out of the 26 Nationally Determined Contributions reviewed

**10**  
countries integrate sexual and reproductive health and rights  
out of **26**  
total Nationally Determined Contributions



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## Other references to sexual and reproductive health and rights

Both Mexico and Costa Rica acknowledge that people with diverse SOGIESC feel the disproportionate impacts of climate change. Mexico recognizes sexual minorities as a group vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change (Mexico NDC, 2020: p. 9). Costa Rica includes transgender people (Costa Rica NDC, 2020: pp. 13, 50, 111–112) as a particularly vulnerable population to climate change, and goes on to state that consultation with these populations informed the development of the NDCs (Costa Rica NDC, 2020: pp. 94, 100). Costa Rica also includes transgender community groups in adaptation measures, such as developing spaces for dialogue and participation for vulnerable groups (Costa Rica NDC, 2020: p. 50), monitoring the required indicators to ensure empowerment (Costa Rica NDC, 2020: p. 52), collecting disaggregated data (Costa Rica NDC, 2020: p. 53) and the training and capacity-building

of institutions and decision makers regarding the differentiated impacts of climate change on these groups (Costa Rica NDC, 2020: p. 62).

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela is the only country in the region to acknowledge the importance of SRHR information and awareness in the context of climate change, through reference to its initiative to integrate environmental and comprehensive health into the basic education system, which is aimed at promoting harmonious relationships between human beings and nature from all aspects and which includes sexual reproduction (the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela NDC, 2021: p. 112). The only reference to the use of contraceptives was found in Dominica, in the context of economic and social empowerment of women for sustainable development (Dominica NDC, 2022: p. 22), while family health and hygiene is mentioned by Belize in its adaptation education awareness programme (Belize NDC, 2021: p. 27) (see table 1).



| <b>TABLE 1:</b><br><b>Key references to sexual and reproductive health and rights in Nationally Determined Contributions in Latin America and the Caribbean</b> |   |
|---|---|
| Belize  | "...develop education awareness programme to educate population on adaptation measures as it relates to family health and hygiene." (p. 27)   |
| Costa Rica**  | "Among the most vulnerable groups are people with disabilities, transgender people, older adults, women and youth and children, Indigenous Peoples and Afro-descendant communities." (pp. 13, 112–113)  |
|   | "Starting from 2021, the country will develop spaces for dialogue and participation, both virtual and face-to-face, for groups that are particularly vulnerable to climate change, including the Afro-descendant community, organized groups of women, youth, the transsexual community, Indigenous Peoples, people with disabilities and older adults, in a way that is appropriate and accessible to the realities, worldviews and traditions of the different communities and populations." (p. 50)  |
|   | "By 2030, the country will have differentiated data on the reality of groups historically excluded and most vulnerable to the effects of climate change, including at least the Afro-descendant community, organized groups of women, youth, the transsexual community, Indigenous Peoples, people with disability and older adults." (p. 53)   |
| Dominica  | "Reinforce priorities around poverty reduction, promotion of justice and economic and social empowerment of women and girls informal sector work and contraceptive use to ensure Sustainable Development." (p. 22)  |
| Mexico  | "The consequences of the adverse effects of this global phenomenon are even more serious for individuals and groups in vulnerable social, economic and environmental situations, including women, indigenous and Afro-Mexican communities, children, youth, migrants, people with disabilities, sexual minorities, low-income groups, and the elderly." (p. 9)  |
| Panama**  | "Inequalities between men and women suggest a situation of feminization of poverty, where differences in terms of individual income, unemployment, underemployment and land ownership are just some areas that show gender inequality. According to information provided by the United Nations Development Program[mme] ..., the value of the HDI [Human Development Index] for women corresponding to Panama in 2018 is 0.794, while for men it is 0.790, and, consequently, the value of the Index of Gender Development is 1,005. On the other hand, the 2010 HDI introduced the Gender Inequality Index, which reflects gender-based inequalities in three dimensions: reproductive health, empowerment, and economic activity. Panama obtained a value of 0.460 in the Gender Inequality Index, so in 2018 it ranks 108th out of a total of 162 countries. For every 100,000 live births, 94 women die from pregnancy-related causes, and the adolescent fertility rate is 81.8 births per 1,000 women ages 15 to 19." (p. 23) |
| Paraguay**  | "Drive response capacity building of the Health local sectors (regions), Regional Hospitals, District Hospitals, and the Family Health Units (USF) in emergencies associated with the phenomena of extreme weather and climate." (p. 51)  |
| Venezuela (the Bolivarian Republic of)**  | "Among the integrating axes of the Bolivarian National Curriculum of the Basic Education Subsystem, we have 'Environment and Comprehensive Health' aimed at promoting the development of harmonious relationships between human beings and nature (environment), highlighting the importance of looking at the whole Planet Earth as an integrated system where human beings are immersed, where we must learn to take advantage of and make rational and conscious use of natural resources. In addition, it promotes the understanding of comprehensive health, from all aspects (sexual reproduction, risk management, recreation, nutrition, among others), thus minimizing threat scenarios, natural physical risks and social impacts, which leads to the strengthening of a culture of prevention, contributing to the full development of the human being and to living well." (p. 112)   |

\*\* Quotes from this NDC, in the table and elsewhere in the report, have been translated from Spanish into English.

## Gender-based violence

GBV is mentioned in three NDCs (see table 2). The Dominican Republic describes its political constitution, which incorporates equal rights between men and women, prohibits domestic violence and GBV and includes violence against women as one of the seven national themes described in the National Plan for Gender Equality and Equity 2020–2030 (Dominican Republic NDC, 2022: pp. 75, 77). El Salvador wants to ensure that women and girls have equal access to its sustainable transportation and technologies and that preferential access is available to identified groups, including adolescents, in a society free from violence against women (El Salvador

NDC, 2021: p. 93). The mention of rape in the NDC of Antigua and Barbuda refers to the name of a civil society organization, Women Against Rape, that was consulted during the NDC updating process (Antigua and Barbuda NDC, 2021: p. 58).

## Harmful practices

Despite emerging evidence suggesting that climate impacts could exacerbate the drivers of harmful practices such as child marriage and female genital mutilation, the region's climate policies and documents do not address or make any mention of these specific practices (Esho, 2021).

**TABLE 2:**  
Key references to gender-based violence in Nationally Determined Contributions in Latin America and the Caribbean

|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| Antigua and Barbuda        | "Key Stakeholder Agencies Consulted: Civil Society: Women Against Rape." (p. 58)  |
| Dominican Republic (the)** | "The Political Constitution of the Dominican Republic (2010) incorporates important elements for the advancement of gender equality, declaring that the State must promote equal rights between women and men (article 39), responsible motherhood and fatherhood, and assessment of domestic work (article 55), as well as sanctioning domestic and gender violence (article 42)." (p. 75) |
| El Salvador**              | "Equal access for women and men to sustainable transport infrastructure and technologies, in an environment free of violence against women, and preferential access for girls, boys, adolescents and young people on the roads to schools and higher education institutions." (p. 93)   |

\*\* Quotes from this NDC, in the table and elsewhere in the report, have been translated from Spanish into English.



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## Health

### FIGURE 2:

Number of Nationally Determined Contributions that integrate health issues out of the 26 Nationally Determined Contributions reviewed



All 26 NDCs reference health and nearly all countries (23) recognize health as a sector vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Paraguay includes sensitization and awareness actions as objectives within the health sector to equip it with the capacity to adapt to climate change and promote active participation of citizenship, starting with the dissemination of knowledge about the impacts of climate change on health (Paraguay NDC, 2021: pp. 41, 54). Haiti includes adaptation measures to build resilience of the health sector, such as reinforcing systems for the prevention and treatment of climate-related diseases, ensuring adequate equipment in health establishments such as dispensaries and hospitals, establishing health and environmental programmes, capacity-building of health personnel through training courses, implementing a health insurance programme

and creating funds for the compensation of loss and damage related to climate change (Haiti NDC, 2022: pp. 46, 49). Crucially, each of these measures has cost estimates. The Dominican Republic also provides a budget line for measures to improve the resilience of the health sector (US\$ 1.9 million), alongside estimates to aid food and water security (US\$ 670 million and US\$ 4.7 billion, respectively) (Dominican Republic NDC, 2020: p. 47).

Most countries (24) describe the increasing intensity and frequency of extreme events due to climate change. Many countries, such as Panama (2020: p. 49), mention vulnerable segments of the population, such as women and children, who are at heightened vulnerability to extreme events, and many describe disaster risk reduction strategies to build resilience of the population for such events.

For example, the Dominican Republic describes an initiative, Community Networks for Prevention, Mitigation and Response, whereby community members are trained on preparedness, response and recovery actions in their community to create community management teams and are equipped with response skills in the event of a disaster (Dominican Republic NDC, 2020: p. 54). Nicaragua includes the development of flood-resilient infrastructure in vulnerable cities as a key adaptation measure, with an estimated cost of US\$ 450 million (Nicaragua NDC, 2020: p. 27). Guatemala estimates that around three quarters of the country's population live in areas exposed to climatic hazards (Guatemala NDC, 2022: p. 9). It hence includes measures to restore mangrove ecosystems and create protected marine-coastal zones to serve as a natural barrier to protect communities from extreme weather events (Guatemala NDC, 2022: pp. 44–45). Antigua and Barbuda narrates how an estimated 80 per cent of its GDP is at risk due to more frequent and intense tropical storms and hurricanes, as well as its vulnerability to droughts, intense floods, rising air temperatures, decreased annual rainfall and an increase in air pollution, highlighting human lives and livelihoods as the cost of inaction (Antigua and Barbuda NDC, 2021: p. 7).

A total of 14 countries acknowledge that strengthening health surveillance is an important component of building health system resilience to climate change. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela includes adaptation actions to train health professionals and organizations in entomological surveillance actions and vector control measures, and to strengthen surveillance and sanitary control of water and air quality in view of the impacts of climate change (the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela NDC, 2021: pp. 130–131). An adaptation measure in the NDC of Paraguay is to “consolidate the National Epidemiological Surveillance system with capacity to generate information on the impacts of climate change on human health” (Paraguay NDC, 2021: p. 41). Early warning systems are a commonly referenced aspect of surveillance. For example, Colombia describes a goal to increase the percentage of the monitoring network with real-time transmissions connected to early warning systems from 24 per cent to 35 per cent by 2030 (Colombia NDC, 2020: p. 49). One of the objectives of El Salvador to address the health impacts of climate-related emergencies and disasters is the “development of a surveillance, supervision, and care model of the nutritional status of populations affected or at risk”, with the integration of the vulnerabilities of boys, girls and women (El Salvador NDC, 2021: pp. 90–91). This is expected to reduce population exposure as a result of more effective evacuation procedures and sheltering options and the inclusion of a food aid approach.

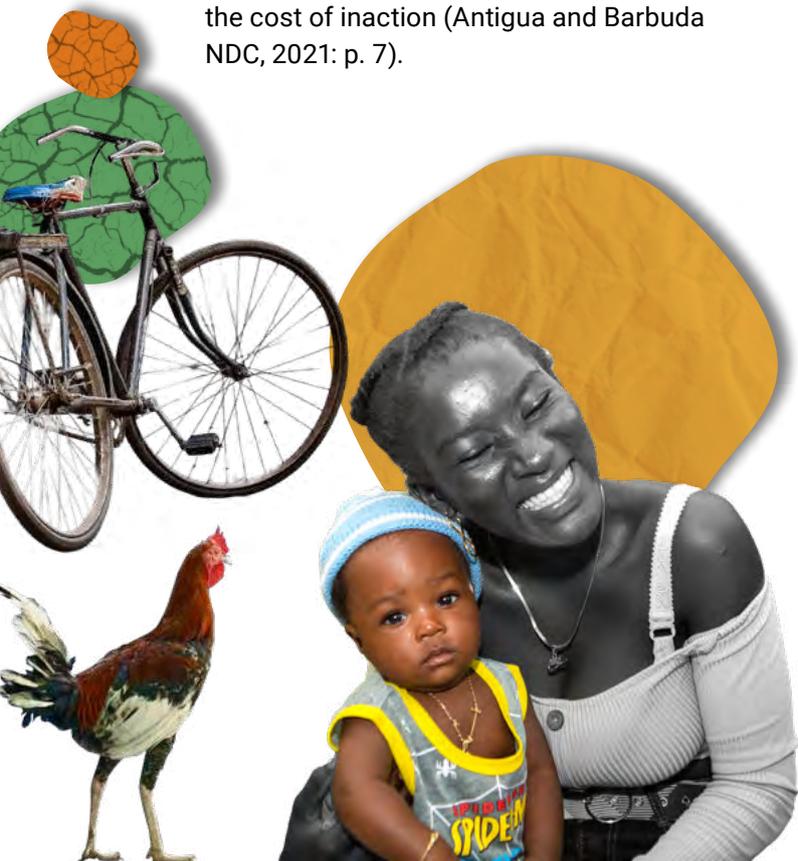




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Just over half of the countries (14) mention access to and demands on health care, often in respect to extreme weather events and the devastating impacts these can have on health services. Costa Rica (2020: p. 27) and Panama (2020: p. 71) commit to guaranteeing the continuity of vital services such as health, water and sanitation in the face of extreme events. The Dominican Republic includes a measure to improve health services for vulnerable groups of its population (Dominican Republic NDC, 2020: p. 13).

Sixteen countries mention COVID-19. The Plurinational State of Bolivia uses the pandemic to demonstrate the importance of, and opportunity for, health sector

adaptation to the impacts of climate change (the Plurinational State of Bolivia NDC, 2022: p. 7). Paraguay describes the need for economic reactivation and promotion of green recovery options after the COVID-19 pandemic (Paraguay NDC, 2021: p. 27).

Food and water security are prominent health-related themes, referenced in 20 and 17 NDCs, respectively. One example is in the NDC of the Plurinational State of Bolivia, which links the impacts of climate change with food insecurity and subsequent malnutrition and higher mortality rates, and with the greater burdens faced by vulnerable groups (the Plurinational State of Bolivia NDC, 2022: p. 5).



Nicaragua describes and provides an estimated cost for a 2017–2021 project, “Support for the Livestock Value Chain in Nicaragua”, which aimed to increase income, food and nutritional security through more productive and environmentally-friendly farming practices (Nicaragua NDC, 2020: p. 19). The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela describes a body created for water security, the Ministry of People’s Power for Water Attention, created for the sustainable administration of water sources under a public, democratic and protagonist management scheme (the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela NDC, 2021: p. 99). Saint Kitts and Nevis notes that more frequent dry conditions have led to prolonged drought and left rain-fed agriculture vulnerable to increased risk of food and water insecurity, with competition for the dwindling supply of fresh water leading to further water shortages (Saint Kitts and Nevis NDC, 2021: p. 14).

Diseases are referenced by 17 countries, usually to describe the increasing number of climate-related diseases in the face of climate change. Guatemala, for example, describes diseases as a health risk identified from climate change, including vector-borne diseases such as malaria, dengue, chikungunya, Zika, Chagas disease and leishmaniasis; zoonotic diseases such as rabies and leptospirosis; skin diseases; and cardiovascular diseases, among others (Guatemala NDC, 2022: p. 53). Colombia describes how climate-sensitive diseases have been increasing in the country and thus includes a goal that, by 2030, adaptation actions will be formulated in disease prevention and health promotion, and flags the relevant institutions responsible for this (Colombia NDC, 2020: p. 11). The impacts and negative image of an increase in vector-borne diseases such as the Zika virus and chikungunya on regional trade and tourism

are concerns for Belize (2021: p. 6). Pollution, waste and sanitation are referenced in 22 NDCs, while air pollution is mentioned in 11. Nicaragua describes an initiative, “La Chureca”, to reduce environmental pollution by sealing landfills and constructing recycling plants alongside houses and a school for the more than 250 families of the waste collectors who will work in the plants (Nicaragua NDC, 2020: p. 16). Cuba links pollution with gender as it describes how measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the swine industry will contribute to the reduction of dumping sites and pollution of drainage basins. This will enhance environmental conditions and lead to additional income through the sale of by-products like fertilizer, which will improve working and living conditions “mainly for women, by improving cooking conditions and working conditions” (Cuba NDC, 2020: p. 19).

Nine out of 17 countries recognize the need for further research on the health-related impacts of climate change. Nicaragua highlights developing knowledge and response capacities on the impacts of climate change on the human health of its people as a key adaptation measure, but provides no further detail on steps to achieve this (Nicaragua NDC, 2020: p. 27). Costa Rica (2020: p. 75), the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (2021: p. 109) and Paraguay (2021: p. 41) all include adaptation objectives promoting research into vector-borne diseases, with the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela aiming to estimate and identify the most vulnerable areas and populations. El Salvador intends to strengthen intersectoral and inter-institutional capacity through measures that include research on climate and health (El Salvador NDC, 2021: pp. 87–89).



## Gender

**FIGURE 3:** Number of Nationally Determined Contributions that integrate gender issues out of the 26 Nationally Determined Contributions reviewed

**26**

integrate gender

out of **26**

total Nationally  
Determined Contributions

All 26 NDCs reference gender, most commonly in the form of gender mainstreaming and gender sensitivity to climate impacts (23 NDCs). However, only nine countries (Antigua and Barbuda, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Costa Rica, Dominica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) include a measurement, accountability mechanism or indicator to track gender-sensitive progress, such as the adaptation goal for Guatemala that, “by 2025, 32% of the national territory is covered by forests and at least 30 per cent of the forests under management are managed by indigenous and non-indigenous women” (Guatemala NDC, 2022: p. 48).

Eighteen countries recognize the disproportionate impacts of climate change on women: Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Chile, Costa Rica, Dominica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. Mexico (2020: p. 14) and Honduras (2021: p. 9) both describe how women are more vulnerable than men due to their restricted access to land, finances, information and technology. Costa Rica includes an action to conduct at least one study on the risks and impacts of climate change on vulnerable populations, with attention to differentiated gender impacts by 2022 (Costa Rica NDC, 2020: p. 75).

Although countries mention adopting a gender approach, or ensuring the consideration of gender issues within NDC development and climate action, far fewer describe this in detail or provide indicators and actions to achieve this. Haiti stands out in describing achievable and specific measures to ensure gender mainstreaming within adaptation and mitigation measures, including setting up a specific working group on gender and climate change, having at least one gender focal point sitting within the National Committee on Climate Change, strengthening girls' and women's access to relevant information on climate change, including climate technologies, and involving gender experts in the development and implementation of monitoring and evaluation frameworks for actions to combat climate change, (Haiti NDC, 2022: p. 56). Honduras includes objectives to ensure the implementation of a gender-responsive NDC with action lines that include the integration of gender-sensitive budgets and the promotion of research on gender and climate change, among others (Honduras NDC, 2021: p. 12).

Costa Rica commits to having a Gender and Climate Change Action Plan by 2022 (Costa Rica NDC, 2020: p. 77) and importantly states that US\$ 1.2 million has been allocated for this from the Inclusive Fund for Sustainable Development to promote the financial recognition of the productive spaces of rural women and their contribution to climate action (Costa Rica NDC, 2020: p. 59). In recognition of the disproportionate impacts of climate change and energy poverty on women, Antigua and Barbuda pledges to develop policies that will ensure that the disparities in needs between men and women are met. These policies will include an equitable distribution of resources, status, benefits and rights as well as the mainstreaming of gender in the country's energy planning through an Inclusive Renewable Energy Strategy (Antigua and Barbuda NDC, 2021: p. 15).

References to participation and/or decision-making are included in 16 countries (Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Costa Rica, Dominica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Saint Kitts and Nevis and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela), with most of these stating that women participated in the consultation for and development of the NDC. Paraguay (2021: p. 31) and Panama (2020: p. 29) provide transparency on this participation by sharing details of the percentage of women and men consulted in the NDC development process. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela describes the increasing political participation of women in the past couple of decades (the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela NDC, 2021: p. 118), while the Plurinational State of Bolivia describes a goal to increase women's political participation in different territorial, political and decision-making spaces by increasing land ownership rights for women by 2030 to at least 43 per cent from the 2020 baseline of 31 per cent.





This will be achieved through regulation and titling of land, guaranteeing distribution and redistribution of land with productive potential and regulation of the land market (the Plurinational State of Bolivia NDC, 2022: p. 30). Honduras describes women's participation in natural resource management, with women's participation as one of three essential criteria in a forest restoration programme (Honduras NDC, 2021: p. 30). Dominica commits to reserve access to 40 per cent of its Climate Change Trust Fund for women as well as increase the representation of women in decision-making and the workforce (Dominica NDC, 2022: pp. 21–22).

Enhancing the capacity of women is described in 14 NDCs: Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Saint Kitts and Nevis

and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. Honduras (2021: pp. 15, 36) and Panama (2020: pp. 44, 75) both reference waste management and energy sector initiatives as key areas to promote the empowerment of women. The Honduras National Strategy for the Adoption of Improved Stoves aims to reduce firewood consumption in homes, with co-benefits of less pressure on forest resources and improved indoor air quality, reducing the risk of respiratory diseases and premature deaths, mainly of women and children, and the empowerment of women through increased time and money to generate value and reduce poverty (Honduras NDC, 2021: p. 36). Barbados places a high priority on encouraging and supporting women's entrepreneurship and business development through grants, loans and technical assistance for micro- and small businesses due to the vulnerability of households headed by women (Barbados NDC 2021: p. 17).



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Women in agriculture is another common theme (12 NDCs) within which there is noticeable reference to the empowerment of women. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela describes a project that seeks to empower rural women and recognize their ancestral knowledge through its integration in agricultural policies, such as by guaranteeing equal access to land ownership and strengthening women agricultural producers through training, technical support and financing mechanisms (the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela NDC, 2021: p. 119). Nicaragua describes a US\$ 37 million project, carried out between 2014 and 2020, to improve family income and generate jobs in sustainable agroforestry for rural coffee and cocoa-producing families while promoting gender equity (Nicaragua NDC, 2020: p. 18). Honduras includes measures for gender equality such as gender-responsive field schools to promote sustainable family farming and agrifood chains, the establishment of family vegetable garden initiatives for women with technical and financial support and improving access to agricultural insurance against loss and damage for women, among others (Honduras NDC, 2021: p. 15). El Salvador pledges to incorporate local and Indigenous agricultural knowledge of women and rural communities into its journey towards sustainable agriculture (El Salvador NDC, 2021: p. 56).

Seven countries reference gender alongside water and food security, either noting the differentiated impacts of these on women, or describing initiatives to promote water or food security in which women have a central role. For example, Panama notes there is a lack of sex-disaggregated data to highlight the vulnerabilities and differences experienced by men and women in access to water resources and a lack of a budget to execute further research and planning of water resources to address this (Panama NDC, 2020: p. 50). Paraguay promotes the role of women as agents of change

for the efficient access and use of water resources for consumption and productive processes (Paraguay NDC, 2021: p. 67).

Twelve out of 26 countries mention women in relation to health. Panama notes that increasing climate-related diseases, such as COVID-19, have direct impacts on care responsibilities and burdens and disparities in access to health care that disproportionately affect women and girls (Panama NDC, 2020: p. 66). The Dominican Republic references its National Plan for Gender Equality and Equity 2020–2030, which includes women’s comprehensive health as one of its seven themes (Dominican Republic NDC, 2020: p. 96). Honduras includes a measure to create gender-responsive community systems for flood and drought early warning and contingency and risk management plans. These will be created and maintained with the participation of women throughout their duration, alongside the integration of women’s groups in programmes to prevent forest fires (Honduras NDC, 2021: p. 15). In order to manage their particular risks and impacts of climate change on human health, food security and other sectors, Dominica pledges to develop an enabling framework for climate response for the most vulnerable members of society, including women (Dominica NDC, 2022: p. 84).



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## Population dynamics, human mobility and urbanization

**FIGURE 4:**

Number of Nationally Determined Contributions that integrate population dynamics issues out of the 26 Nationally Determined Contributions reviewed

**24**  
include references to  
population dynamics

out of **26**  
total Nationally  
Determined Contributions

**FIGURE 5:**

Number of Nationally Determined Contributions that integrate migration and urbanization issues out of the 26 Nationally Determined Contributions reviewed

**14**  
include references to migration,  
urbanization and  
human mobility

out of **26**  
total Nationally  
Determined Contributions

Twenty-four of the NDCs reviewed in this region contain references to population dynamics. Fourteen acknowledge the impacts of climate change on increasing migration and human displacement. Honduras describes

climate change “as a matter of survival and currently one of the main causes of human displacement”, noting that tropical storms Eta and Iota forced 96,649 people to take refuge in shelters (Honduras NDC, 2021: p. 5).

Saint Kitts and Nevis recalls the combined 3,154 people who were displaced by Hurricanes Georges, Lenny and Omar between 1998 and 2008, and expresses concern about a potential increase in human mobility, including displacement, migration and community relocation, which could result in significant loss and damage, including “loss of culture, lifestyle, traditions and heritage; negative impacts on physical health, mental and emotional well-being; loss of sense of place and identity and declines in self-determination, dignity and sovereignty” (Saint Kitts and Nevis NDC, 2021: p. 15). Panama describes the critical situation of Guna Yala Comarca, an archipelago on the Caribbean coast that has needed a plan for displacement and relocation since 2014 due to rising sea levels (Panama NDC, 2020: p. 18). Mexico also describes how social and economic conditions, “coupled with the increase of adverse hydrometeorological phenomena, such as flooding and droughts, have forced people to leave their homes” (Mexico NDC, 2020: p. 14), and subsequently pledges to “identify and address forced displacement of people due to the negative impacts of climate change” (Mexico NDC, 2020: p. 15).

Many countries include adaptation measures to address the observed increasing trends in climate migration. Chile commits to developing guidelines on the impacts of climate change on human mobility (Chile NDC, 2020: p. 94). Cuba aims to reduce demographic density in low-lying coastal areas threatened by flooding using lower-cost, nature-based solutions, such as rehabilitation of beaches and reforestation, alongside the relocation of human settlements in vulnerable coastal cities (Cuba NDC, 2020: p. 5). Paraguay recognizes the need to reduce loss and damage associated with extreme and slow-onset weather events, which are causing forced displacement

and migration (Paraguay NDC, 2021: p. 38). Saint Lucia is establishing contingency funds for climate impacts with flexible and rapid disbursement mechanisms. The country is also implementing policies that offer assistance and livelihood protection to those who are displaced internally, across borders and in host communities (Saint Lucia NDC, 2021: p. 6). In addition, Haiti (2022: p. 49) and the Dominican Republic (2020: p. 49) elaborate on possible interventions, including specific budget allocations, related to relocating vulnerable populations.

Six countries (Barbados, Chile, El Salvador, Panama, Peru and the Dominican Republic) describe urbanization within the context of climate change as a challenge to health due to poor air quality, which traps heat in the atmosphere. Peru references high levels of urban air pollution (Peru NDC, 2020: p. 13) while Chile (2020: p. 94) and the Dominican Republic (2020: p. 92) both link urbanization with negative health impacts such as poorer air quality. Panama describes how urban development has exacerbated climatic and social vulnerabilities such as rapidly built, poor-quality infrastructure and informal settlements that cannot withstand climatic hazards. To address this, Panama City has created a resilience strategy that includes tools such as vulnerability maps (Panama NDC, 2020: p. 65). For Barbados, the island nation’s dense population increases the risk of destructive natural disasters, places a greater strain on its meagre resources and creates competition for available space (Barbados NDC 2021: p. 9). In the event of emergencies and natural disasters, El Salvador commits to take steps to reduce the likelihood of damage to cities and populated areas, as well as fatalities, evacuations and humanitarian crises (El Salvador NDC, 2021: p. 74).



## Youth

**FIGURE 6:** Number of Nationally Determined Contributions that integrate youth out of the 26 Nationally Determined Contributions reviewed

**22**  
integrate youth issues

out of **26**  
total Nationally  
Determined Contributions

Twenty-two countries mention youth in some capacity within their NDCs. Only Brazil, Colombia, Cuba and Jamaica conspicuously make no reference to youth in their NDCs. Fifteen countries recognize the greater impacts of climate change on youth, with girls commonly noted as being particularly vulnerable. Ten countries describe young people as vulnerable to the health impacts of climate change, with Honduras (2021: p. 41) and Panama (2020: p. 49) both highlighting young people as particularly vulnerable to disasters, and the Plurinational State of Bolivia noting that more than 2.7 million children and adolescents, comprising 24 per cent of the population, live in areas at high risk of floods and droughts (the Plurinational

State of Bolivia NDC, 2022: p. 5). The Dominican Republic states that the households with the greatest environmental vulnerability are those headed by people aged between 16 and 17 years old (Dominican Republic NDC, 2020: p. 40).



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Guatemala, Panama, Paraguay, Saint Lucia and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela all reference food and/or water insecurity in relation to youth. Panama highlights that water scarcity, in some cases, leads to child labour among girls and therefore encourages the participation and consideration of all vulnerable groups in its National Plan for Water Security 2015–2020 (Panama NDC, 2020: p. 51) (see box 1). Paraguay describes an objective to “promote the development of school programmes that implement agro-ecological gardens in educational centers for self-sufficiency and improvement of the food security of children of school age” (Paraguay NDC, 2021: p. 62), while Guatemala includes a goal to reduce the prevalence of chronic malnutrition in children under five by 7 per cent by 2024, with an annual reduction of 1.75 per cent (Guatemala NDC, 2022: p. 42). Saint Lucia is implementing school gardening programmes with community groups to enhance food security and has integrated children and youth into this resilience-building measure (Saint Lucia NDC, 2021: p. 9).

Eighteen countries reference youth participation in NDC development and/or climate action. Many of these countries,

such as Mexico, highlight the importance of participation of youth in addressing climate change and how active participation in NDC development allows for the inclusion of their concerns and proposals. However, the methods for inclusion and participation are rarely documented (Mexico NDC, 2020: p. 10).

The use of government bodies and strategies as another means of fostering youth participation are discussed in some NDCs. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela describes the creation of a Ministry for Youth and Sports in 2014, which reinforces public policies aimed at young people, such as the formation of youth brigades for risk management (the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela NDC, 2021: pp. 120, 122). Costa Rica includes an action to create a plan for the integration of youth in climate action by 2022, and, by 2024, will strengthen structures for the incorporation of youth and children into climate empowerment actions, including through an annual forum (Costa Rica NDC, 2020: p. 50). The Dominican Republic quotes its Constitution, which guarantees and promotes youth rights, and the General Youth Law, which ensures youth participation in national development processes (Dominican Republic NDC, 2020: p. 78).

### The Nationally Determined Contribution for Panama, describing the links between youth and water insecurity

#### BOX 1:

“In terms of gender, the Panamanian National Plan for Water Security 2015–2050 highlights that water scarcity exacerbates gender inequality, and in some cases leads to child labour among girls. Therefore, Panama is committed to achieving equitable access to adequate sanitation and hygiene services for all people, paying special attention to the needs of women, girls and vulnerable people. To this end, the Government will facilitate the participation of men, women, children and vulnerable groups in the management of the sustainable use of water resources at all levels and in the distribution of benefits, and a gender perspective will be integrated into the design and implementation of water resource management programmes.” (p. 51)

*Note:* This text has been translated from Spanish into English.

Saint Lucia remarks that broad consultation and specific engagement of youth stakeholders was crucial in securing their buy-in to the NDC process and revised targets. It also makes reference to its commitment to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which it is a signatory, to ensure “the development of its children and youth, by encouraging their involvement in the decision-making process on climate change matters at the national and global levels” (Saint Lucia NDC, 2021: p. 14).

Ten countries, including Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Honduras, Paraguay and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, refer to youth in relation to education and/or awareness. Paraguay aims to develop programmes and projects to raise awareness about climate change with youth associations (Paraguay NDC, 2021: p. 44) while the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela describes the Water in our Lives programme, which seeks to raise awareness among children, girls and adolescents about the use, protection and exploitation of water (the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela NDC, 2021: p. 102). The Dominican Republic describes the *School Guide for the Study of Freshwater Ecosystems: Rivers and Lakes*, which seeks to raise awareness about climate change in schools (Dominican Republic NDC, 2020: p. 104). Antigua and Barbuda commits to several educational and capacity-building actions in its approach to children and youth, including the promotion of environmental education to support climate action. This is in line with the island nation’s commitments to Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE)

regarding the involvement of children and youth in adaptation and mitigation action. The country is also looking to empower young people with the skills needed for broader social inclusion opportunities (Antigua and Barbuda NDC, 2021: p. 16).

### Youth report: a youth perspective on the Nationally Determined Contributions

Around the world, young people are extremely worried about climate change, with 75 per cent of the world’s youth population fearing the impacts of climate change on their lives, livelihoods and opportunities (Hurley, Dalglish and Sacks, 2022). Many young people report fears about forming families and having children due to the existential threats presented by the climate crisis (UNICEF, 2022). Climate and health impacts will be most severely felt by marginalized children and adolescents, including Indigenous adolescents, refugees and adolescents with disabilities (UNICEF, 2022). Direct and indirect impacts on mental health are unequally distributed (WHO, 2022) and are expected to worsen in children and adolescents, particularly girls, with increasing temperatures (IPCC, 2022). Four million girls in low- and lower-middle-income countries will be prevented from completing their education because of climate-related events (Malala Fund, 2021). While young people face unique climate-related risks, they have been integral to bringing public attention to the crisis and leading the way in analysis, action and in demanding accountability.

For this review, UNFPA consulted with young people from the UNFPA Joint Youth Working Group on SRHR and Climate Change and YOUNGO, the youth constituency of the UNFCCC. The aim of the consultation was to incorporate young people’s lived experiences from the region to capture youth perspectives on the NDCs and the climate crisis.



Through analysis of five selected countries, youth reviewers presented their perspectives on progress towards, and recommendations for, better inclusion of SRHR, youth and gender in the NDCs. A key component of the climate work of UNFPA is to empower adolescents and young people to build resilient communities, safeguard their well-being and protect their livelihoods.

### Joint youth review of Latin America and the Caribbean

Isabel Adriana García Gómez, a young feminist activist and advocate for the environment and SRHR, conducted the review of five countries in LAC. She holds a degree in biology and has received additional training in sustainability leadership, gender, human rights and the agenda of women, peace and security. As the Country Coordinator of the International Youth Alliance for Family Planning, Ms. Gómez provides technical guidance, conducts research, develops guidelines and creates resources for political advocacy on the climate crisis. The countries reviewed by Ms. Gómez include Mexico, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Chile, Nicaragua and Paraguay.

Valery del Carmen Salas Flores, a young climate advocate, engineer and sustainability consultant from Peru, took on the task of reviewing her home country. As a Climate Reality Leader trained by Al Gore, Ms. Flores has dedicated nearly six years to climate-related education, with a focus on making it accessible to young people in Peru and LAC, following the principle of ACE. In her role as Co-coordinator of the Latin American and the Caribbean Youth Climate Movement, Global Coordination Team at YOUNGO and Regional Conference of Youth Liaison 2022, Ms. Flores actively engages in various climate initiatives. Her aim is to empower youth and facilitate their participation in climate action.



Isabel Adriana García Gómez, Member, UNFPA Joint Youth Working Group on SRHR and Climate Change



Valery del Carmen Salas Flores, Member, UNFPA Joint Youth Working Group on SRHR and Climate Change



## Findings

Addressing solutions to climate change from a gender and youth perspective is crucial to guarantee inclusive results that truly achieve social and environmental justice. Within the NDCs of the countries analysed, it was observed that the governments recognize the importance of assessing the risk of climate change with special attention to women and girls, and that they seek to integrate the gender perspective in their adaptation proposals and mitigation measures.

On the other hand, the Joint Youth Working Group consider it necessary to integrate youth into the coordination channels for the design and implementation of the NDCs, as well as to strengthen the link between the development of strategies and increasing the capacity of youth to adapt to the impacts of climate change. Some of the major problems identified include the fact that youth are not recognized as subjects of rights, and that the gender perspective is understood as differentiated impacts on girls and women, which excludes other identities such as LGBTQIA+ community members.

Despite all the barriers and limitations, Peru's NDC (2020) not only includes themes about gender and youth but has created an entire infrastructure to manage stakeholders in the National Commission on Climate Change, also considering Indigenous peoples and the private sector. Now, these groups have official spaces to oversee, co-create and work together in the implementation and evaluation of progress on the NDC. This approach has been upscaled to the National Strategy on Climate Change, where consultations are held and comments received online. Gender, including its intercultural and intergenerational dimensions, is formally recognized as an approach in the NDC. However, a quantitative approach is also needed to evaluate the impacts of the implementation of mitigation and adaptation measures to identify if gender gaps are being attended to or considered, as well as their links with SRHR.

## Key quotes:

**Isabel García Gómez**



Photo: © Isabel Adriana García Gómez

“Although many NDCs of my region recognize that structural inequalities that place people in different degrees of vulnerability persist, and efforts are made to include the perspective of gender, intersectionality and in some cases the youth perspective in a transversal way to guarantee that no one is left behind, we still need to move to the generation of information with data disaggregated by gender and age that allow them to know and make visible other direct and indirect impacts of climate change on other rights, such as SRHR including GBV.”

“Although Paraguay does not address SRHR directly, there are possibilities for this to be addressed in the implementation of some of its health strategies. For example, strengthening health response capacity to deal with climate change-related emergencies could ensure basic SRHR emergency packages, as well as ensure that the contraceptive and retroviral supply chain is not interrupted. Additionally, in the consolidation of the National Epidemiological Surveillance System, information could be generated to review the impacts of climate change on SRHR.”

**Key quotes:****Isabel García Gómez**

“The only reference to youth in Chile’s NDC is ‘intergenerational equity’ as one of the areas in which it is necessary to focus capacity development and climate empowerment. This fact is alarming when it is Chilean youth who have led efforts at the national level to carry out youth climate summits and actively participate in the Conferences of the Parties. Chilean youth are carrying out high-level political advocacy, so their voices should be reflected in the country’s NDC updates.”

“We, the youth of Latin American and Caribbean, recognize that the lack of understanding of youth as a heterogeneous group in the implementation of adaptation and mitigation policies and programmes has meant that Indigenous youth, youths of African descent, migrant, displaced and refugee youth, and non-binary and trans youth are left out of the discourse on climate change and SRHR. This has repercussions on our life course and therefore also on the future of societies.”

“For me, the fact that we find the word ‘youth’ on the NDC is just a first sign of maybe one day achieving intergenerational justice. However, finding the word is not the same as having meaningful youth engagement and is not the same as youth being active members of NDC implementation. So my suggestion would be that the NDCs update the structure of the reports detailing, per stakeholder, the actions taken to include them and the best practices. Also, quantitative data is needed to showcase the impact of this and to evaluate the representation of youth and gender approach in the process.”

**Key quotes:****Valery Flores**

Photo: Valery Flores at Youth4Climate pre-COP26

“The level of vulnerability of all youth is not the same. Some have more adaptive capacities, and some need more help. Good progress is that youth is not seen as only vulnerable but also as a stakeholder that is capable of contributing.”

“One major example from Peru is the Youth Representation at the National Commission on Climate Change. Youth from all of Peru can now elect their representatives for the commission and deliver their needs on a geographically based approach. Each region has a representative and can engage in the co-creation of policies. This was achieved through dialogues and open consultations for stakeholders that continue to happen for different processes in the Ministry of Environment. Communication is key, and the Ministry has been able to deliver in that sense.”





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### Taking action

1. Strengthen inter-institutional coordination around the participation of youth to ensure the mainstreaming of their perspectives throughout the cycle of policies and programmes on climate change adaptation and mitigation. Efforts to include youth, women and Indigenous peoples are welcome but a missing issue is the participation of children and adolescents.
2. Mobilize funds to enhance the efforts that youth and women are making in their local communities and in national territories to gather the needs of young people and their perspectives on how climate change is impacting their SRHR and, more broadly, their lives. A larger budget is needed to establish open spaces to debate and collaborate with decision makers, women, youth and other marginalized groups.
3. SRHR terms need to be referenced more in the texts to present a clearer link between climate actions and SRHR. More evidence of how climate action and SRHR can together reduce inequalities is needed.
4. Create local, regional and/or global platforms, such as youth advisory groups, that allow youth to monitor and evaluate the integration of the youth perspective in the NDCs and its implementation. These should allow information and knowledge to be generated by youth in Indigenous languages, and include persons with disabilities.



## Leaving no one behind: human rights, participation and consideration of vulnerable groups

**FIGURE 7:** Number of Nationally Determined Contributions that integrate human rights, participation and consideration of vulnerable groups out of the 26 Nationally Determined Contributions reviewed



The majority (22) of NDCs describe segments of their population as particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. This most commonly includes women, youth, older persons, persons with disabilities, Indigenous peoples and people of African descent. Guatemala references the Human Development Index, in which it ranked 127th out of 189 countries in 2020, and describes how climate change is exacerbating socioeconomic vulnerabilities among its population (Guatemala NDC, 2022: p. 17). The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela references the principle of leaving no one behind by collecting disaggregated data on the most vulnerable sectors of society: women, older persons,

persons with disabilities, people of African descent, children and Indigenous peoples (the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela NDC, 2021: p. 32). The Plurinational State of Bolivia also highlights people experiencing rural poverty (54 per cent of the population, of which 98 per cent are Indigenous) as highly vulnerable to climate change due to their dependence on natural resources and agricultural production, and includes a goal to provide agricultural insurance to at least 50 per cent of families (211,000 families) with crops vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change, up from a 2020 baseline of 33 per cent (the Plurinational State of Bolivia NDC, 2022: pp. 5, 32).

Dominica acknowledges the significant vulnerability of the Indigenous Kalinago people and their culture to the severe impacts of climate change, as well as recognizing them as “the most significantly disadvantaged group in Dominica” (Dominica NDC, 2022: p. 24).

Nineteen countries (Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Costa Rica, Dominica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) make special mention of Indigenous communities and/or people of African descent, an issue of particular importance to the region. Costa Rica includes a measure to develop specific training programmes for Indigenous peoples, people of African descent, women and young people and other groups historically excluded from the labour sector to facilitate access to green jobs (Costa Rica NDC, 2020: p. 48). Honduras proposes a measure to develop gender-responsive community early warning systems, particularly in Indigenous and Afro-Honduran communities in coastal areas (Honduras NDC, 2021: p. 15). Nicaragua describes

a law that guarantees the property rights of Indigenous peoples and its National Strategy for the Reduction of Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation, which guarantees full participation of Indigenous territories and peoples (Nicaragua NDC, 2020: p. 31). The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela includes an action to strengthen 3,200 Indigenous communities by 2025 by promoting training and financial support for socio-productive units in Indigenous communities. Indicators for this include the percentage of employed Indigenous peoples and the participation of Indigenous communities in the country’s GDP (the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela NDC, 2021: p. 128).

Alongside describing the most vulnerable segments of society, many countries include measures to reduce these vulnerabilities and increase the resilience of vulnerable populations. For example, Honduras commits to establishing a working group on gender, Indigenous peoples, Afro-Honduran people and young people by 2030, alongside the collection and analysis of data disaggregated by gender, youth, Indigenous peoples and Afro-Honduran people (Honduras NDC, 2021: pp. 12, 14). Costa Rica also includes multiple measures aimed at vulnerable members of society, such as analysis of disaggregated data on these groups, training programmes to empower and facilitate access to green jobs in areas including renewable energy, and conducting studies on the costs of inaction associated with climate change, with special attention to the most vulnerable (Costa Rica NDC, 2020: pp. 48, 51, 75). Dominica seeks to pursue the integration of the Kalinago people’s perspectives, culture and language to enable it to “reverse the factors that marginalize them in many contexts and systematically change their lives for the better” (Dominica NDC, 2022: p. 23).



The island nation also commits to a number of key measures specific to building the resilience of the Kalinago people, including a widespread climate risks education and awareness programme, the establishment of a climate change “easy access trust fund” to address threats to food security, community disaster shelters and the construction of a landing site in Kalinago for fishers unable to travel to the urban centre of Marigot (Dominica NDC, 2022: p. 24). As part of its strategy to ensure gender- and socially-inclusive implementation of its NDC, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela considers vulnerable Indigenous peoples throughout, with measures such as the construction of 533 homes to help eradicate extreme poverty within the Indigenous population, and working in consultation with Indigenous communities in the development of the project (the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela NDC, 2021: p. 127). Paraguay includes multiple objectives within the energy sector to increase the resilience of vulnerable communities through the better provision of electricity alongside the generation and promotion of alternative energy sources (Paraguay NDC, 2021: p. 42). The country also promotes “the use of efficient kitchens for families in vulnerable rural areas, especially those more dependent on the use of biomass in cooking” (Paraguay NDC, 2021: p. 59).

Nearly all NDCs (25) acknowledge the importance of a participatory process and the inclusion of key populations in the development of climate policy and NDCs. Most NDCs describe their development process as participatory, although few give details on this process. Paraguay (2021: p. 33) and Panama (2020: p. 134) describe in detail the number of people interviewed and the percentage of these that were male and female. The NDC of Panama makes a specific effort to recognize Indigenous groups’ representation in the review processes and provides a breakdown of the demographics of the participants in



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the public consultation for NDC development. In the case of Paraguay, the number and gender of participants from organized or unorganized civil society groups, as well as rural or Indigenous communities, are included. Honduras describes two active listening sessions with women, youth, Indigenous peoples and people of African descent, and four workshops with communities under land-use and forestry programmes in its NDC development (Honduras NDC, 2021: p. 23). Belize describes its inclusion of vulnerable populations in the NDC inception workshop and throughout the NDC update process, for which progress was validated by a technical committee of sector leads including representatives of Indigenous peoples (Belize NDC, 2021: p. 38). Grenada emphasizes its whole-of-society approach in its NDC review process, which was overseen by the National Climate Change Committee and included representatives of various stakeholder groups, including vulnerable and marginalized groups, at various stages of the development process (Grenada NDC, 2020: p. 2).





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Many countries describe methods to increase public participation in climate action. The Plurinational State of Bolivia references ACE and methods to reduce the population's vulnerability and increase empowerment in the face of climate threats through education, awareness-raising, participation and capacity development (the Plurinational State of Bolivia NDC, 2022: pp. 7–8). Chile ensures active engagement of citizens through participation mechanisms indicated under Law No. 20,500 and its Strategy for Capacity Development and Climate Empowerment (Chile NDC, 2020: pp. 26, 74). To promote participation and awareness of climate actions, Paraguay plans to create spaces for cooperation between organized and unorganized civil society entities (Paraguay NDC, 2021: p. 49). The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has created a General Directorate for Adaptation and Mitigation of Climate Change (the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela NDC, 2021: p. 25).

Most countries (19) reference public and community participation in sustainable local resource management. Chile describes its National Strategy for Climate Change and Vegetation Resources as a highly participatory process (Chile NDC, 2020: p. 53), while Nicaragua describes its National Reforestation Crusade, ongoing since 2007 with the participation of civil organizations, which conducts educational sessions and establishes and conserves forest plantations (Nicaragua NDC, 2020: p. 37). Guatemala includes multiple adaptation measures for natural resource management, including mangroves, fisheries and forests, “with the full participation of local communities, indigenous and Garifuna peoples, women’s groups and youth” (Guatemala NDC, 2022: p. 40).



Colombia describes its strategy for forest fire management through the creation and strengthening of community groups that will be trained as first responders to minor forest fires (Colombia NDC, 2020: p. 58). Haiti includes a measure to carry out training related to coastal protection and marine environments, and provides cost estimates for this (Haiti NDC, 2022: p. 46). El Salvador takes an inclusive approach, in addition to the Principle of Free, Prior and Informed Consent, in its implementation framework outlining the participation of local groups, Indigenous populations and other stakeholders in the development of local restoration and sustainable environmental development plans, including conservation of biodiversity and restoration of degraded lands, while adjusting to their needs and requirements as may be necessary (El Salvador NDC, 2021: p. 47). Belize commits to promote and enhance ongoing Indigenous community land stewardship practices in addition to creating an adaptation strategy for its most vulnerable coastal communities (Belize NDC, 2021: p. 38).

Human rights are referenced in 13 NDCs. Many countries refer to the right to a healthy environment, water and/or food in their NDC,

including the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (2021: p. 87) and Mexico (2020: p. 9). Panama is unique in listing migrants among other vulnerable segments of society, which also includes Indigenous peoples, children and persons with disabilities, and considering their rights as equally central to NDC implementation (Panama NDC, 2020: p. 6). The Plurinational State of Bolivia describes the importance of protecting the “rights of Mother Earth” in accordance with the rights of people to their integral development (the Plurinational State of Bolivia NDC, 2022: p. 3). Some NDCs reference legislative instruments to ensure a human rights-based approach to the NDC. For example, Honduras references the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women (2000), the National Policy of Women, the National Youth Policy and Public Policy Against Racism and Discrimination for the Comprehensive Development of Indigenous and Afro-Honduran Peoples and Social Protection Policy (Honduras NDC, 2021: p. 10). The Dominican Republic references the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters to protect human rights defenders in environmental matters, and Mexico commits to abide by the objectives of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights under the principle of eliminating all forms of discrimination against women (Mexico NDC, 2020: p. 10). Dominica makes specific reference to the rights of the Kalinago people to self-determination, which it commits to support, in addition to other human rights according to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The country also prioritizes identified adaptation measures with the Kalinago group to reduce the threats to their existence, livelihood and culture. It also recognizes the Kalinago people as the most significantly disadvantaged group in the country while acknowledging its responsibility as a government to the Kalinago people (Dominica NDC, 2022: p. 65).



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## DISCUSSION



### Sexual and reproductive health and rights, gender-based violence and harmful practices

The review found that 10 countries integrate SRHR into their NDCs. This includes references to maternal and newborn health, GBV, SRHR education, adolescent SRHR and diverse SOGIESC. The ways in which SRHR and GBV issues are addressed in the NDCs vary, with some NDCs acknowledging the impacts of climate change on SRHR and GBV and others including adaptation measures to address these impacts. LAC NDCs provide good examples of how SRHR can be integrated into NDCs, with measures such as the commitment of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to include SRHR education in the national curriculum and the integration of SRHR in the health system in Paraguay. However, these references could be strengthened with more specific and detailed action, programming, indicators and costings.

Risks of GBV are known to increase during situations of stress and scarcity, often related to economic instability, food insecurity, unavailability of services and social protection networks and entrenched gender inequality (van Daalen and others, 2022). The impacts of climate change and weather-related disasters can also indirectly exacerbate GBV through climate-induced migration (Castañeda Camey and others, 2020). Despite this, only Antigua and Barbuda, the Dominican

Republic and El Salvador acknowledge this link, with the latter two including action to prevent and protect women from GBV as a climate action measure. This is therefore an area for more policy and programmatic inclusion in LAC NDCs.

This review demonstrates that national-level evidence on the impacts of climate change on SRHR, GBV and harmful practices could be strengthened to ensure more inclusion of women's and girl's unique needs, perspectives and solutions. Only Costa Rica included an action to increase the evidence of the impacts of climate change on people with diverse SOGIESC. Climate change is known to amplify risks of adverse health outcomes in gender-diverse populations due to pre-existing discrimination, stigma and violence (Simmonds and others, 2021). The collection of gender-sensitive data is essential to increase understanding of these threats and inform policy and practice. Where better data or research exists on the impacts of climate change and SRHR, GBV and harmful practices, the development of tailored interventions is supported. This evidence could come in the form of better data collection, research on the impacts of climate change and vulnerability assessments that incorporate SRHR, GBV and harmful practice issues. Furthermore, none of the NDCs provide cost estimates, indicators or mechanisms of implementation for SRHR, GBV and harmful practice measures, which are essential for policymaking and should be integrated into the next round of NDCs. None of the NDCs reviewed made any links to harmful practices.



## Health

All 26 NDCs reference health, with disasters, women's health and diseases the most common cross-cutting topics. For example, Honduras describes the Honduras National Strategy for the Adoption of Improved Stoves, which aims to reduce firewood consumption in homes, with the co-benefits of an improvement in indoor air quality – reducing the risk of respiratory diseases and premature deaths, mainly for women and children – as well as empowering women through increased time and money to generate value, thus reducing poverty (Honduras NDC, 2021: p. 36). Additionally, Honduras includes a plan to create gender-responsive community systems for flood and drought early warning, and contingency and risk management plans. These are to be created with the participation of women throughout their life courses, alongside the integration of women's groups in programmes to prevent forest fires (Honduras NDC, 2021: p. 15).

Assessing the cost of climate change adaptation is essential to policymaking. Our analysis showed that a minority of NDCs include a cost estimate for the measures they describe. Examples of good practices include Haiti (Haiti NDC, 2021: p. 46), which provides an estimate for the costing of adaptation measures to strengthen the resilience of the health sector, such as the reinforcement of systems for the prevention and treatment of climate-related diseases. This will ensure adequate equipment in health establishments, such as dispensaries and hospitals, establishing health and environmental programmes, capacity-building of health personnel through training courses, implementation of a health insurance programme and the creation of funds for the compensation of loss and damage related to climate change. A further example is the Dominican Republic, which has budget lines for measures to improve the resilience of the health sector and food and water security (Dominican Republic NDC, 2020: p. 47).





As health and gender are both well represented in LAC NDCs, this signals an important opportunity for the integration of SRHR and GBV in NDCs. Greater consideration is needed for those left furthest behind, including Indigenous peoples. Stronger linkages between health, gender, SRHR and GBV are also needed.

## Gender

All 26 NDCs integrate gender to some degree, with 23 including an aspect of gender mainstreaming and/or sensitivity. Despite this, only seven NDCs include a measurement or accountability mechanism or indicator to track gender-sensitive progress. Notable examples include an accountability mechanism in the Plurinational State of Bolivia for its goal to increase political participation, with a target to increase land ownership rights for women by 2030 to at least 43 per cent (the Plurinational State of Bolivia NDC, 2022: p. 30). In Costa Rica, a budget allocation of US\$ 1.2 million from the Inclusive Fund for Sustainable Development will promote the financial recognition of the productive spaces of rural women and their contributions to climate action (Costa Rica NDC, 2020: p. 59). Gender references are generally strong in the region, with examples of pathways to implementation. Ensuring cross-country support for NDCs within the region could encourage this good practice.

One of the gender and climate decisions of COP25 in December 2019 was the creation of the National Gender and Climate Change Focal Point (NGCCFP). Only Haiti mentions the NGCCFP in its NDC, possibly due to limited capacity and investment in this area. Furthermore, although most countries acknowledge the impacts of climate change on health, and many NDCs articulate the need to strengthen health systems, only a few describe the need for a resilient health system to ensure continuity of maternal, reproductive, neonatal and child health services. An example

of this is the goal in Paraguay to strengthen its family health units' responses during crises (Paraguay NDC, 2021: p. 51).

Gender and health are the most frequently overlapping and intersecting of all the thematic areas.

## Population dynamics and human displacement

Twenty-four NDCs describe some aspects of population dynamics; however, not all of these are linked to climate change, and some are descriptions of population size and structure. The most common references (in 14 NDCs) are related to urbanization, migration and human displacement. Many countries acknowledge the impacts of climate change through both slow-onset and extreme weather events. Cuba demonstrates an intervention to relocate human settlements in vulnerable coastal cities (Cuba NDC, 2020: p. 5). Saint Lucia is establishing a contingency fund on climate change to assist the internally displaced and host communities (Saint Lucia NDC, 2021: p. 6). Haiti (2021: p. 49) and the Dominican Republic (2020: p. 49) both demonstrate good examples of including a budget line related to population dynamics for the costs associated with relocating vulnerable populations.

LAC is known to be highly vulnerable to disasters and extreme weather events (WMO, 2021), which are driving migration and displacement in the region (International Organization for Migration, 2022).





Migration is a highly gendered issue: women do not have the same access to assets and adaptation options to migrate as men (McOmber, 2020) and in migration they often have their SRHR curtailed and are at heightened risk of GBV (Rocha-Jimenez and others, 2018; Calderón-Jaramillo and others, 2020). Very few of the NDCs consider migration through a gender lens. This area can therefore be strengthened by increasing actions to address women's vulnerabilities during migration, taking anticipatory action to provide SRH and GBV services and prioritizing vulnerable groups in disasters and extreme weather events.

## Youth

The majority (22) of NDCs reference youth, with 18 countries referencing youth participation and 15 NDCs acknowledging the disproportionate impacts of climate change on youth. Youth participation in policymaking ensures the creation of child-sensitive policies that are rights-based, holistic, multisectoral and inclusive. Children and young people should be engaged and empowered at all levels of climate processes to ensure youth mainstreaming in climate policy and action.

Honduras, Saint Lucia and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela all provide good examples of methods to increase and ensure youth participation. The People Power Ministry for Youth and Sports of Venezuela has organized youth congresses, disaster risk reduction youth brigades and educational campaigns (the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela NDC, 2021: p. 121). Saint Lucia secured youth buy-in into the NDC review process following specific consultations for youth stakeholders (Saint Lucia NDC, 2021: p. 14). Honduras established a working group on youth, gender and Afro-Honduran and Indigenous peoples (Honduras NDC, 2021: p. 12). A wider representation of mechanisms to ensure youth participation is required, accompanied by implementing, financing, monitoring and evaluation. Of the 26 countries reviewed, Brazil, Colombia, Cuba and Jamaica conspicuously make no references to youth in their NDCs.

## Leaving no one behind: human rights, participation and consideration of vulnerable groups

The majority (22) of NDCs recognize the disproportionate impacts of climate change on particular segments of the population, with women, youth, Indigenous peoples, people of African descent, older persons and persons with disabilities most commonly mentioned. Costa Rica and Mexico make specific reference to the impacts of climate change on people of diverse and underrepresented SOGIESC. It is essential that these groups, in all their diversity, are explicitly considered and included in climate policy and planning, including disaster risk reduction. Furthermore, 19 NDCs make special mention of the impacts of climate change on Indigenous communities and people of African descent.





Alongside describing the most vulnerable segments of society, many countries include measures to reduce this vulnerability and increase the resilience of vulnerable populations.

Nearly all (25) NDCs contain some reference to public participation in climate policy and/or action. Most NDCs describe their development process as participatory, although few provide details on this process. Some countries reference ACE, a term adopted by the UNFCCC to denote work under Article 6 of the Convention and Article 12 of the Paris Agreement with the overarching goal of empowering all members of society to engage in climate action. Far fewer describe specific programmes under way to increase civil society participation. Many platforms exist that should be used for stakeholder engagement (e.g. youth dialogues, regional workshops, engagement with gender and youth councils) in the implementation of the NDCs to ensure gender-responsive programming and/or to conduct thematic discussions (e.g. on SRHR and GBV). The NDC of Paraguay makes a specific effort to recognize Indigenous representation in the review process and provides a breakdown of the demographics of the participants in the public consultation for NDC development (Paraguay NDC, 2021: p. 33). Guatemala demonstrates the use of an accountability indicator in its adaptation goal that, “by 2025, 32 per cent of the national territory is covered by forests and at least 30 per cent of the forests under management are managed by indigenous and non-indigenous women” (Guatemala NDC, 2021: p. 48). Belize describes its inclusion of Indigenous peoples and other vulnerable populations as part of the technical committee of sector leads in the validation process of its NDC update (Belize NDC, 2021: p. 38).



The UNFCCC recognized the adverse impacts of climate change on the effective enjoyment of human rights and called upon Member States to ensure respect for human rights in their climate actions and decision-making (UNFCCC, 2011). The preamble to the Paris Agreement calls upon signatories to “respect, promote and consider their respective obligations on human rights” (UNFCCC, 2016). This human rights-based approach is well reflected in LAC NDCs, with 13 NDCs referencing human rights. Legislative instruments are an important means in which to ground NDCs. This is demonstrated by the Honduras NDC, which is centred on the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women (2000), the National Policy of Women, the National Youth Policy and Public Policy Against Racism and Discrimination for the Comprehensive Development of Indigenous and Afro-Honduran Peoples, and its Social Protection Policy (Honduras NDC, 2021: p. 10). Dominica makes specific reference to the right of self-determination for the Kalinago people, which it commits to support, and other human rights according to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (Dominica NDC, 2022: p. 65).

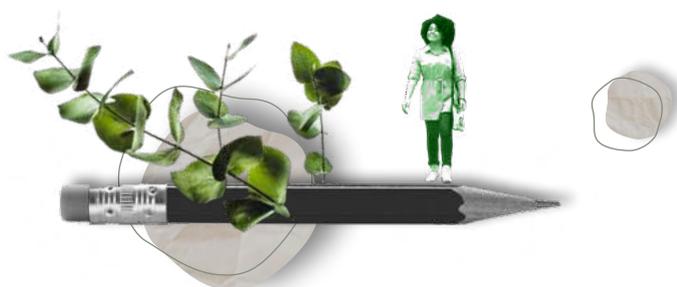


# RECOMMENDATIONS

## General recommendations

### Data and evidence

- 1. Strengthen the national-level evidence on the impacts of climate change on SRHR, GBV and harmful practices.** This should include improving data systems to better account and forecast for the differentiated impacts of climate change on SRHR, GBV and harmful practices, including through the conduct of gender-responsive climate vulnerability and risk assessments that integrate SRHR and GBV. Detailed country-level research, preferably led by local researchers, on the intersections between climate, SRHR and GBV is required to better support communities at the local and national level but also to contribute to the global evidence base.
- 2. Scale up efforts to collect and use disaggregated data and account for the differentiated impacts of the climate crisis.** The demonstration of such efforts in the NDCs is encouraging. Gender-disaggregated data supports the identification of groups that are more vulnerable to climate impacts and can help mobilize more sensitive and accurate climate action. This better represents the differentiated impacts of the climate crisis while supporting research, data, planning and intervention to reach better outcomes. This also enables gender-sensitive budgeting, including for components related to SRHR and GBV.
- 3. Increase support, funding and evaluation for adaptation and resilience-building efforts, including within NDCs and in the development of climate policies.** While adaptation sections are increasing in frequency and detail within NDCs, greater support, evaluation and financing are required to ensure these policies reflect the needs of underserved populations and topic areas, such as SRHR and GBV.
- 4. Strengthen the integration of costed SRHR and GBV interventions across sectors in climate policy and action.** Include SRHR and GBV issues in domains such as gender and health, as these represent entry points for their inclusion in national climate policies. Costed action, tied to monitoring and indicators that reflect impacts on gender, health and SRHR and GBV, requires more financial and technical support. Many existing interventions, particularly related to gender and health, could begin to provide or increase the integration of programming on SRHR and GBV.
- 5. Strengthen health systems' resilience to climate change by ensuring the inclusion of SRHR and GBV.** This includes ensuring the inclusion of SRHR and GBV in vulnerability risk assessments, disaster preparedness plans and health information management systems. Ensure appropriate human resources are available for health, monitoring and evaluation indicators, the allocation of funds and a coordination mechanism.



## Gender equality and representation

**6. Scale up and strengthen gender-transformative climate action through the inclusion of SRHR, GBV and harmful practices issues.** This includes the appointment and strengthening of the role of a NGCCFP to be placed in the relevant ministry, as recommended by a decision of the 2019 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP25); the review of existing gender-related climate policies; and the integration of gender-transformative approaches in all aspects of climate change policies and programmes/interventions, based on a solid foundation of context-specific analysis.

**7. Recognize the impacts of climate change on the drivers of GBV and harmful practices.** Support the development of best practices for responding to GBV and harmful practices, and for ensuring the resilience, including financial, of essential services to prevent and respond to GBV. This can be achieved through partnership with gender and rights actors such as organizations of persons with disabilities, women-led organizations, Indigenous peoples, youth-led organizations and front-line responders.

**8. Ensure inclusion and a minimum standard of representation in the development and implementation of climate policy at multiple levels.** This includes the inclusion and representation of women, people with diverse SOGIESC, youth, Indigenous peoples, older persons, persons with disabilities and others as relevant.



Photo: © UNFPA/Priscilla Mora Flores

## Human rights and leaving no one behind

**9. Improve the understanding of the impacts of climate change on SRHR and GBV for people with diverse and underrepresented SOGIESC.** There is insufficient understanding and recognition of the impacts of climate change on people with diverse SOGIESC. Increasing this understanding will require specific, local and sensitive action that is participatory, accountable and calls on existing best practices.

**10. Mobilize and support young people.** Support youth climate networks and establish a permanent youth engagement mechanism on climate change at the national level to ensure the mainstreaming of youth priorities across the design and implementation of national climate policy and action.

**11. Take an intersectional approach to develop, review and implement climate policy that recognizes the structural drivers of inequality and accounts for multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination.** Climate policy and action must recognize how many of the people who already face barriers to SRHR and GBV services and the realization of their reproductive rights are likely to be disproportionately affected by climate change.





**12. Enhance recognition of climate change impacts on GBV and harmful practices in NDCs and relevant climate policies.**

National climate policies should more meaningfully account for the delivery of GBV services during climate-related events. This includes strengthening the engagement with national gender/GBV-focused mechanisms (e.g. ministries, parliamentary caucuses, civil society networks) as well as climate-focused national mechanisms to present regional and national analysis of the interlinkages between climate change, GBV and harmful practices and collectively develop a consensus on policy advocacy and programming strategies and interventions. This could be achieved through the creation of a common platform for meaningful dialogue, with key mechanisms, networks and leaders engaged in addressing GBV and climate change.

**13. Ensure that climate policies are based on human rights and reflect the principles of the ICPD Programme of Action, including protecting the rights of women, children, refugees, displaced persons and persons with disabilities, in climate policy development.** A human rights-based approach that supports individuals to make the reproductive choices that best suit their personal circumstances is core to achieving SRHR. Population dynamics are relevant for climate policy and planning and the NDCs reflect on urbanization, changing population size and structure and the need for population dynamics analysis for forward planning.

### Region-specific reflections

**14. Strengthen references to SRHR, GBV, harmful practices and climate change within programming, indicators and costings and take specific and detailed action.** LAC NDCs recognize the impacts

of climate change on diverse SOGIESC, GBV, maternal health and education. This is encouraging, particularly in relation to sexual rights and health. However, there is no recognition of impacts on harmful practices in the NDCs reviewed, despite increasing evidence showing such impacts. Strengthening references within programming and costing, together with specified and detailed action, is required.

**15. Strengthen the linkages between health, gender and SRHR across LAC NDCs.**

This will help ensure greater consideration for those left furthest behind and a comprehensive integration of gender and SRHR dimensions. While health issues are well represented in LAC NDCs, there is a need to enhance the costings and expand the focus on access to health services, particularly for vulnerable groups, while also recognizing the crucial intersection with gender and SRHR.

**16. Strengthen anticipatory action for disasters and extreme weather events by integrating comprehensive provisions for SRHR, the elimination of GBV and the prioritization of vulnerable groups.**

Recognize that extreme weather events can cause significant disruptions to health services, displacement of populations and heightened vulnerability, underscoring the urgent need for humanitarian responses to include robust SRHR and GBV services. Furthermore, outreach efforts must address the needs of groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. To ensure effective and principled humanitarian preparedness and response, pre-position population statistics and data for accurate and targeted interventions that address the specific vulnerabilities and challenges faced by marginalized communities.





**17. Significantly enhance measures and mechanisms to facilitate and promote more meaningful and inclusive youth participation in climate action.** Although LAC NDCs acknowledge the impacts of climate change on future generations, highlighting linkages to health, livelihoods, employment and the disproportionate impacts on girls, it remains imperative to ensure the availability of high-quality, accessible and culturally appropriate SRHR and GBV services to strengthen youth resilience. Although there is recognition of the importance of involving young people in climate action, it is crucial to establish robust frameworks for implementing, financing and measuring youth engagement, creating concrete pathways for their active involvement in shaping climate policies and strategies. This will ensure that the voices, concerns and aspirations of youth are effectively integrated into decision-making processes, fostering more inclusive and effective climate action across the region.

**18. Translate positive examples of recognizing vulnerability, human rights and participation into practice and increase linkages to SRHR, GBV and harmful practices.** NDCs recognize the disproportionate impacts on particular groups such as people of African descent and Indigenous peoples, and are generally strong on human rights. There are encouraging examples of engagement with vulnerable groups. While some NDCs describe concrete actions linked to these examples, others need to support references with more meaningful action such as indicators, costings and implementation mechanisms.

**19. Prioritize and significantly strengthen the generation, analysis, use and disaggregation of data to comprehensively**

**account for the differentiated impacts of the climate crisis on various populations.** Disaggregated data plays a crucial role in identifying and understanding the vulnerabilities of different populations to climate impacts, enabling the design and implementation of more targeted and effective climate actions, emergency preparedness and response and resilience measures. It is essential to apply and operationalize human rights principles and leave no one behind in all data exercises, ensuring that marginalized and disadvantaged communities are not overlooked or excluded. By harnessing the power of accurate and inclusive data, decision makers can foster greater equity, informed policymaking and strategic resource allocation to address the urgent challenges posed by the climate crisis while safeguarding the rights and well-being of all individuals.

**20. Allocate a substantial and specific portion of the Loss and Damage Fund to interventions addressing SRHR, GBV and harmful practices.** Recognizing the heightened vulnerability of SIDS and Caribbean countries, which face recurrent and severe climate change impacts that significantly affect their economies, it is crucial to ensure that a significant proportion of the funds allocated to each country is earmarked for interventions in these critical areas. By dedicating resources from the Loss and Damage Fund to SRHR, GBV and harmful practices, countries can effectively mitigate the adverse impacts of climate change on vulnerable populations, safeguarding their health, well-being and rights. This targeted allocation of funds will support comprehensive and responsive interventions that address the specific challenges faced by communities disproportionately affected by climate change. This will foster resilience and enable sustainable development.



# CONCLUSION

In Latin America and the Caribbean, where the reality of climate change looms large, we are compelled to act and adapt with urgency. The link between climate change, sexual and reproductive health, and gender equality is clear: climate change can increase health risks and vulnerabilities, making gender equality crucial for resilience and well-being. Championing sexual and reproductive health and rights is key to building resilient societies and for the well-being of our nations.

SUSANA SOTTOLI, REGIONAL DIRECTOR,  
UNFPA REGIONAL OFFICE FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN



## This regional review of the integration of SRHR and rights-based approaches in 26 NDCs in the LAC region found 10 references to SRHR and GBV issues.

The review found no references to harmful practices. Some countries only refer to aspects of SRHR and GBV in their situational analysis, and others acknowledge the impacts of climate change on SRHR and GBV but without addressing any specific programmatic dimensions. A few others not only acknowledge the impacts of climate change on SRHR and GBV, but also propose substantial and multiple interventions to address these impacts.

This is a call to action for UNFPA and other advocates of SRHR and GBV prevention and response, including policymakers, parliamentarians, researchers and service providers, to enhance their engagement with climate change mechanisms and advocate for a better understanding of the interlinkages between climate action, SRHR and GBV. There are opportunities to ensure more meaningful climate action that addresses vulnerability, inequality and the importance of leaving no one behind. SRHR and interventions to address GBV and harmful practices are cornerstones of resilience and adaptation, and realizing SRHR is an indicator of a healthy and equal society. As the climate crisis intensifies, greater investment, engagement and prioritization of SRHR, GBV and harmful practices is needed to ensure no one is left behind and that inequalities are not further exacerbated.

As the next round of NDC submission approaches in 2025, there are opportunities for engagement with relevant bodies to address the intersection of SRHR, GBV and harmful practices and climate change

more broadly in national climate policies and, equally, to address climate change in national SRHR, GBV and harmful practices policies through people-centred, rights-based and gender-transformative approaches. This engagement should go beyond the NDCs to engage national policy-level ecosystems, including national climate policies, as well as GAPs, national adaptation plans (NAPs) and other relevant plans. Civil society and public engagement and consultation should be meaningful and externally assessed to ensure that data and feedback collected during consultations are reflected in NDCs.

### Taking action

The results of this report will provide an opening for dialogue at global, regional and national levels on the ways that climate change, SRHR, GBV and harmful practices intersect and to identify entry points for climate action. Highlighting gaps as well as opportunities and promising practices allows for greater and more meaningful integration of aspects of SRHR, GBV and harmful practices in climate policies.





Below are some suggested avenues for further engagement with climate, SRHR, GBV and harmful practices policies in your region or territory:

**Create** a platform for stakeholder involvement at all levels and work across sectors to ensure integration of SRHR, GBV and harmful practices in relevant policy and programming.

- Disseminate the findings of this report among relevant stakeholders, including colleagues, ministerial actors, fellow activists and other interested parties in your region. Organize a discussion forum or workshop to facilitate an exchange of ideas and perspectives on the intersections between SRHR, GBV, harmful practices and climate impacts within your local context. This platform will provide an opportunity to explore how these findings align with and enhance the understanding of SRHR, GBV and harmful practices in relation to climate change in your specific region.

Specific ideas to strengthen the discussion include:

- Invite experts, researchers and practitioners working in the fields of SRHR, GBV, climate change and environmental justice to share their insights and experiences.
- Encourage participants to share local case studies, success stories, challenges and innovative approaches to addressing SRHR, GBV and harmful practices in the context of climate change.
- Facilitate group discussions and brainstorming sessions to identify key priorities, gaps and potential strategies for integrating SRHR, GBV and harmful practices into climate policy and action.
- Conduct a comprehensive mapping of climate policies in your country, going beyond the NDCs. Explore and identify other

relevant climate policies, such as GAPs, NAPs or any other national policies that provide opportunities for the inclusion of SRHR, GBV and harmful practices.

Specific ideas to strengthen the mapping process include:

- Collaborate with local research institutions, civil society organizations and relevant government agencies to gather information and analyse the existing climate policies.
- Examine the extent to which these policies address issues of SRHR, GBV and harmful practices and identify potential entry points for integration.
- Highlight good practices and successful initiatives within climate policies that address SRHR, GBV and harmful practices and showcase them as examples to inspire further action.
- Actively engage in national consultations on climate policy, including the updating of NDCs and the development of NAPs and GAPs. Stay informed about the processes and timelines related to these consultations, and proactively seek opportunities to participate and contribute your insights and perspectives.

Specific ideas to strengthen your engagement include:

- Reach out to relevant government agencies, United Nations entities and civil society organizations involved in the climate policy development process, expressing your interest in participating and contributing.
- Prepare position papers or policy briefs highlighting the importance of integrating SRHR, GBV and harmful practices into climate policy and action and share them with key stakeholders.





- Advocate for the inclusion of SRHR, GBV and harmful practices in the discussions, emphasizing their critical role in addressing the climate crisis and ensuring the well-being and rights of all individuals, particularly those most vulnerable to climate impacts.
- Collaborate with like-minded organizations and activists to amplify your collective voice and advocate for meaningful inclusion and action on SRHR, GBV and harmful practices in climate policy at the national level.

**Contribute** to the national dialogue and strengthen NAPs and specific interventions to include delivery of SRHR and GBV services for women and girls as well as prevention of harmful practices.

- Learn about the NDC and NAP development or update process in your country or region:
  - Research and gather information about the specific steps and timeline involved in the development or update of NDCs and NAPs in your country or region.
  - Identify the key government agencies or bodies responsible for coordinating these processes and reach out to them to request information or guidance on how to engage effectively.
  - Attend workshops, webinars or information sessions organized by government agencies or climate-related organizations to learn about the requirements and expectations for engaging in the NDC and NAP development or update process.
  - Connect with local civil society organizations, research institutions or advocacy groups that have experience or knowledge about the NDC and NAP processes to gain insights and guidance.
- Advocate for the meaningful inclusion and engagement of stakeholders:
  - Advocate for the meaningful inclusion and active engagement of a diverse range of stakeholders in the development and implementation of NDCs and NAPs. This includes local groups, young people, women's groups, Indigenous peoples, underrepresented groups and other relevant stakeholders.
  - Engage with decision makers, government officials and relevant institutions through letters, petitions or direct meetings to emphasize the importance of inclusive and participatory processes.
  - Collaborate with local organizations and networks that represent the interests of marginalized or underrepresented groups to amplify their voices and advocate for their meaningful inclusion.
  - Highlight the benefits of diverse perspectives and experiences in crafting climate policies that address the specific needs and challenges faced by different groups.
  - Provide concrete suggestions and recommendations for ensuring inclusive engagement, such as organizing targeted consultations, creating dedicated spaces for marginalized groups to voice their concerns and establishing mechanisms for ongoing dialogue and feedback.
- By actively engaging in the NDC and NAP processes and demanding inclusive participation, you can contribute to the development of more comprehensive and equitable climate policies that reflect the needs and aspirations of all stakeholders.





**Strengthen** the evidence base for the interlinkages between climate change and SRHR, GBV and harmful practices in your country and region.

- Gather information in your country, region or territory:
  - Conduct research and gather information on the intersections between SRHR, GBV, harmful practices and climate impacts in your specific context. Look for existing studies, reports or data that highlight these connections and provide insights into the challenges and opportunities for addressing them.
  - Engage with local research institutions, universities or non-governmental organizations working on climate change, SRHR, GBV and harmful practices to explore possibilities for collaboration and knowledge sharing.
  - Participate in relevant meetings, workshops or conferences that focus on climate change, SRHR, GBV or harmful practices to learn from experts and practitioners in the field and gather valuable information.
- Incorporate SRHR, GBV and harmful practices as areas of interest:
  - Advocate for the inclusion of SRHR, GBV and harmful practices as specific areas of interest in relevant research undertakings, meetings, data-gathering activities and programmes. Emphasize the need to understand and address the intersections between these issues and climate impacts.
  - Collaborate with researchers, organizations or institutions working on climate change to explore opportunities for joint research or data-collection initiatives that incorporate SRHR, GBV and harmful practices as key components.
- Engage with local or regional climate change platforms, working groups or task forces to raise awareness about the importance of addressing SRHR, GBV and harmful practices and advocate for their inclusion in discussions and decision-making processes.
- Raise questions and ensure accountability:
  - Participate actively in relevant forums, such as policy dialogues, conferences or community meetings, where climate change and related issues are discussed. Raise questions and highlight the intersections between SRHR, GBV, harmful practices and climate change.
  - Engage with duty bearers, policymakers and government representatives at the national and regional levels to hold them accountable for considering the intersection of these issues in their work.
  - Request transparency and accountability in national and regional climate change strategies, policies and programmes, urging decision makers to integrate considerations of SRHR, GBV and harmful practices in their approaches.
  - Collaborate with local and regional advocacy groups, women's rights organizations, youth networks and other relevant stakeholders to amplify your voices and jointly advocate for the recognition and inclusion of these intersections in climate change policies and actions.
- By gathering information, incorporating these issues in relevant activities and demanding accountability, you can contribute to raising awareness and promoting the integration of SRHR, GBV and harmful practices considerations in climate change agendas in your country or region.



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## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Selection of Nationally Determined Contributions in Latin America and the Caribbean for review

| Country included                   | Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) reviewed | Submission date   | Original language |
|------------------------------------|---|-------------------|-------------------|
| Antigua and Barbuda                | <u>Updated NDC</u>                                | 2 September 2021  | English           |
| Argentina                          | <u>Second NDC</u>                                 | 2 November 2021   | Spanish           |
| Barbados                           | <u>Updated NDC</u>                                | 30 July 2021      | English           |
| Belize                             | <u>Updated NDC</u>                                | 1 September 2021  | English           |
| Bolivia (Plurinational State of)   | <u>Second NDC</u>                                 | 21 April 2021     | Spanish/English   |
| Brazil                             | <u>Second NDC</u>                                 | 7 April 2021      | English           |
| Chile                              | <u>Updated NDC</u>                                | 9 April 2020      | English           |
| Colombia                           | <u>Updated NDC</u>                                | 30 December 2020  | Spanish           |
| Costa Rica                         | <u>Updated NDC</u>                                | 29 December 2020  | Spanish           |
| Cuba                               | <u>Updated NDC</u>                                | 17 September 2020 | Spanish/English   |
| Dominica                           | <u>Updated NDC</u>                                | 4 July 2022       | English           |
| Dominican Republic (the)           | <u>Updated NDC</u>                                | 29 December 2020  | Spanish           |
| El Salvador                        | <u>Updated NDC</u>                                | 4 January 2022    | Spanish           |
| Grenada                            | <u>Second NDC</u>                                 | 1 December 2020   | English           |
| Guatemala                          | <u>Updated NDC</u>                                | 1 April 2022      | Spanish           |
| Haiti                              | <u>Updated NDC</u>                                | 1 June 2022       | Spanish           |
| Honduras                           | <u>Updated NDC</u>                                | 19 May 2021       | Spanish           |
| Jamaica                            | <u>Updated NDC</u>                                | 1 July 2020       | English           |
| Mexico                             | <u>Updated NDC</u>                                | 30 December 2020  | Spanish/English   |
| Nicaragua                          | <u>Updated NDC</u>                                | 24 December 2020  | Spanish           |
| Panama                             | <u>Updated NDC</u>                                | 28 December 2020  | Spanish           |
| Paraguay                           | <u>Updated NDC</u>                                | 16 July 2021      | Spanish           |
| Peru                               | <u>Updated NDC</u>                                | 18 December 2020  | Spanish           |
| Saint Kitts and Nevis              | <u>Updated NDC</u>                                | 25 October 2021   | English           |
| Saint Lucia                        | <u>Updated NDC</u>                                | 27 January 2021   | English           |
| Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) | <u>Updated NDC</u>                                | 9 November 2021   | Spanish           |



| Country not included             | Reason for exclusion   |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Anguilla                         | Not a Member State of the United Nations/party to UNFCCC                           |
| Aruba                            | Not a Member State of the United Nations/party to UNFCCC                           |
| Bahamas (the)                    | Submitted first NDC before (31 October 2016), with no update by August 2022        |
| Bermuda                          | Not a Member State of the United Nations/party to UNFCCC                           |
| British Virgin Islands           | Not a Member State of the United Nations/party to UNFCCC                           |
| Cayman Islands                   | Not a Member State of the United Nations/party to UNFCCC                           |
| Curacao                          | Not a Member State of the United Nations/party to UNFCCC                           |
| Guyana                           | Submitted first NDC before 2020 (20 May 2016), with no update since                |
| Ecuador                          | Submitted first NDC before (29 March 2019), with no update since                   |
| Montserrat                       | Not a Member State of the United Nations/party to UNFCCC                           |
| Saint Maarten                    | Not a Member State of the United Nations/party to UNFCCC                           |
| Saint Vincent and the Grenadines | Submitted first NDC before 2020 (29 June 2016), with no update since               |
| Suriname                         | Submitted first and second NDC before 2020 (9 December 2019), with no update since |
| Trinidad and Tobago              | Submitted first NDC before 2020 (22 February 2018), with no update since           |
| Turks and Caicos Islands         | Not a Member State of the United Nations/party to UNFCCC                           |
| Uruguay                          | Submitted first NDC before 2020 (14 November 2017), with no update since           |

## Appendix 2: Summary tables

| Table 1: Sexual and reproductive health and rights, gender-based violence and harmful practices references across Latin America and the Caribbean Nationally Determined Contributions |                             |                                   |                                 |                                    |                       |  |                              |  |  |   |       |
|---|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------|--|------------------------------|--|--|---|-------|
| Region (number of Nationally Determined Contributions)  | Maternal and newborn health | Family planning and contraception | Abortion and post-abortion care | Menstruation and menstrual hygiene | Gender-based violence | Adolescent and youth sexual and reproductive health and rights | Early, forced child marriage | HIV and AIDS and sexually transmitted infections | Sexual orientation, gender identity and expression and sex characteristics | Sexual and reproductive health and rights information and awareness | Other |
| Latin America and the Caribbean (26)  | 3                           | 1                                 | 0                               | 0                                  | 3                     | 1  | 0                            | 0  | 1  | 2   | 0     |

| Table 2: Human rights, participation and vulnerable groups references across Latin America and the Caribbean Nationally Determined Contributions |                         |  |                       |                       |   |                           |                       |              |  |
|--|-------------------------|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|---|---------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|--|
| Region (number of Nationally Determined Contributions)   | Vulnerable groups       |  |                       |                       | Participation of population in:                 |                           |                       | Human rights |  |
|  | As main pillar/strategy | Communities dependent on natural resources | In relation to health | In relation to gender | Nationally Determined Contributions development | Local resource management | In relation to gender |              |  |
| Latin America and the Caribbean (26)   | 22                      | 11   | 15                    | 18                    | 25  | 19                        | 18                    | 13           |  |

| Table 3: Population dynamics, human mobility and urbanization references across Latin America and the Caribbean Nationally Determined Contributions |                     |                                 |
|---|---------------------|---------------------------------|
| Region (number of Nationally Determined Contributions)  | Population dynamics | Urbanization and human mobility |
| Latin America and the Caribbean (26)  | 24                  | 14                              |

| Table 4: Youth references across Latin America and the Caribbean Nationally Determined Contributions |                     |               |                       |                                    |                                     |
|--|---------------------|---------------|-----------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Region (number of Nationally Determined Contributions)   | As vulnerable group | Participation | In relation to health | In relation to education/awareness | Consideration of future generations |
| Latin America and the Caribbean (26)   | 15                  | 18            | 10                    | 10                                 | 13                                  |

| Table 5: Gender references across Latin America and the Caribbean Nationally Determined Contributions |               |               |        |               |             |        |        |             |                     |  |
|---|---------------|---------------|--------|---------------|-------------|--------|--------|-------------|---------------------|--|
| Region (number of Nationally Determined Contributions)  | Mainstreaming | Vulnerability | Rights | Participation | Empowerment | Health | Energy | Agriculture | Water/food security |  |
| Latin America and the Caribbean (26)  | 23            | 18            | 13     | 16            | 14          | 12     | 5      | 12          | 7                   |  |

| Table 6: Health references across Latin America and the Caribbean Nationally Determined Contributions |           |          |               |       |              |                         |      |       |          |                       |          |           |             |
|---|-----------|----------|---------------|-------|--------------|-------------------------|------|-------|----------|-----------------------|----------|-----------|-------------|
| Region (number of Nationally Determined Contributions)  | Mortality | Diseases | Air pollution | Waste | Surveillance | Access service/supplies | Food | Water | Research | Information/campaigns | COVID-19 | Disasters | Budget line |
| Latin America and the Caribbean (26)  | 16        | 17       | 11            | 22    | 14           | 14                      | 20   | 17    | 9        | 4                     | 16       | 24        | 4           |





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