



COP30: Asia and the Pacific Regional Brief

The Significance of COP30 in Belém, Brazil

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The Thirtieth Session of the Conference of Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change || An Asia and the Pacific Regional Brief

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1.0 BACKGROUND

The Asia and the Pacific region is home to 60 per cent of the world's population – 4.7 billion people – this number is projected to increase to 5.2 billion by 2050¹. This region includes the world's most populous countries, China and India. The region also contains some of the smallest populations on the planet, especially among the Small Island Developing States in the Pacific. This diversity is accompanied by changing demographic trends, characterised by overall lower fertility and mortality rates, as well as rapid urbanisation and sizeable migration flows within and outside the region².

This population reality of our region poses significant pressure on human development dynamics as climate change poses a 'profound existential threat' to Asia and the Pacific, with the potential to disrupt decades of progress and burden future generations with the costs of unsustainable economic development, according to the 2023 Human Development Report covering the region³.

Asia and the Pacific is warming at nearly twice the global average, leading to severe impacts such as record-breaking heatwaves, sea-level rise, and more frequent extreme weather. The region is highly vulnerable to these climate shocks, which threaten ecosystems, economies, and human lives, particularly in low-lying coastal areas and small island nations, where rising sea levels and storm surges pose additional risks⁴. When disasters strike, women are disproportionately impacted and more likely to be injured due to long-standing gender inequalities that have created disparities in information, mobility, decision-making, and access to resources and training⁵.

The impacts of climate change escalate social, political and economic tensions in fragile and conflict-affected settings – areas in which women and girls are already vulnerable to all forms of gender-based violence. For instance, in rural economies, a prolonged drought or powerful flood that hits local agriculture can destroy sources of income, as well as access to food and clean water⁶.

Access to food becomes more difficult as climate impacts intensify, including for women and girls in all their diversities, especially their food consumption, particularly as in many countries women are already eating least and last, which leads to higher susceptibility to undernutrition and other health problems. Undernourished women are at higher risk

of pregnancy and delivery complications, amenorrhea, and infertility, while girls experience delays in menarche. Climate change-related disasters are forcing families to find quick solutions to their immense struggles, and the unavailability of adequate medical services is adding to their burden. Climate change creates a scarcity of food supply as production is damaged or destroyed. Food prices increase, and it makes food more inaccessible to poor people, particularly to poor women who control homestead-based livelihoods, who suffer from income losses when crops are blown or washed away. There is a possibility of suffering from chronic nutritional deficiency. Women, who are often engaged in agricultural activities, may face challenges in ensuring food security for their families due to climate-related uncertainties.

Climate policies in Asia and the Pacific are increasingly focusing on integrating climate risk into financial regulation, accelerating the shift from fossil fuels to green energy, and enhancing resilience to climate impacts. Despite the adversities women and girls face as climate change impacts worsen in the region, scoping studies carried out by ARROW in partnership with UN Women in 2022⁷ showed that the policy landscape on gender, climate change, and disaster risk reduction is diverse and focused on the top-down approach of driving gender-responsive action. In national policy frameworks, key gender-specific issues such as sexual and reproductive health, disability, and gender-based violence get skipped very easily from planning processes and often have to be traded off with competing priorities⁸. The climate-related policies often ignore the lived realities of people and are not backed by evidence-based advocacy and in-depth research about gender. Gender and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) analyses, therefore, are often missing from these strategies.

For decades, national climate policies have been largely informed by the decisions undertaken at a global level, particularly at Conference of the Parties (COP) each year. The significance of the COP is its role as the annual, leading global event for climate diplomacy and action under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). It is a crucial forum where nearly 200 countries meet to negotiate and agree on strategies to combat climate change, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and provide financial and technical support to vulnerable nations. Significant outcomes from past COPs include the Kyoto Protocol, the Paris Agreement, and the Loss and Damage Fund⁹, that have all

triggered national climate policies and strategies. In 2025, the 30th edition of the COP will be held in Belém, Brazil. The COP30 has been dubbed as a “turning point” for the implementation of the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement. During the 16th Petersberg Climate Dialogue, COP30 President, Ambassador André Corrêa do Lago, stressed that COP30 must be a moment for action on sustainable strategies. He stated, “for two decades, this Dialogue has been the most important political forum for promoting progress on the global climate agenda.” He highlighted that in COP30, the debates have the peculiarity of achieving results, “the first COP convened after the year that the world exceeded the 1.5°C temperature limit set by the Paris Agreement.” He reiterated that from Brazil’s perspective, COP30 must mark a decisive shift. “We have debated, discussed, and negotiated. Now it is time for implementation. The world is watching, the world is waiting,” he said¹⁰.

The COP30 is significant as it is the first COP hosted in the Amazon. The host city, Belém, sits at the gateway to the Amazon Rainforest, one of the world’s most critical ecosystems. Holding COP30 in Belém draws global attention to issues of deforestation, indigenous land rights, biodiversity loss and the Amazon’s role in stabilising the global climate¹¹. This COP will also feature an accountability check after the Global Stocktake (GST), COP28 (2023) completed the first Global Stocktake¹², assessing how far the world is from meeting the Paris Agreement goals. The COP30 Action Agenda aims to inaugurate a framework capable of mobilising all actors and efforts to accelerate the implementation of what has already been negotiated, based on the results of the first Global Stocktake (GST-1). The Global Stocktake is the Paris Agreement’s tool that, in 5-year cycles, assesses progress in achieving its goals and guides a global action plan¹³.

Another significant milestone at COP30 is when countries must submit new, stronger Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) based on the Global Stocktake. With new NDCs due in 2025, countries have a critical opportunity to renew their commitments and raise the level of ambition in their targets by integrating tangible actions into their national plans. NDCs specify each country’s plans for limiting global warming to 1.5°C, as established under the 2015 Paris Agreement. These documents must be submitted to the UNFCCC every five years. This year, all 195 signatories are responsible for presenting their updated contributions. As of November 2025, 118 NDCs have been formally submitted¹⁴.

In COP29, the new post-2025 climate finance goal, known as the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG), was agreed upon. It aimed to mobilise at least \$300 billion per year for developing

countries by 2035, with developed countries taking the lead. Additionally, the goal is to work towards a total of \$1.3 trillion per year by 2035, sourced from both public and private capital. This new goal replaced the previous \$100 billion target and recognises the need for significantly more funding to address climate change in developing nations¹⁵. COP30 is also focused on ensuring this finance is channelled efficiently toward national priorities, which will be demonstrated by the launch of the Country Platform Hub and the Belém Declaration for Green Industrialization.

COP 30 marks a pivotal moment for advancing gender equality in climate action. At COP29, following intense negotiations and strong advocacy from civil society, Parties agreed to extend the Lima Work Programme on Gender (LWPG) for another decade and set out a roadmap for creating a new Gender Action Plan (GAP), expected to be adopted at COP30. Decision 7/CP.29 established a plan for developing and adopting the GAP, including one workshop at SBI 62 and one during the regional climate weeks that would set the momentum for GAP negotiations at the COP30, with a potential adoption during the high-level ministerial meetings in the second week of COP30.

The GAP is crucial for the UNFCCC because it ensures climate policies and actions are effective, equitable, and gender-responsive by integrating a gender perspective into all areas of climate work, from mitigation and adaptation to finance and capacity-building. This plan is vital for boosting women’s leadership, addressing unique gender-based vulnerabilities and needs exacerbated by climate change, and ultimately creating more just and resilient climate solutions that benefit everyone.

2. 0 GENDER RESPONSIVE NDCs

Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and gender are linked through the integration of gender equality into climate action plans. Recognising that climate change impacts and responses affect people differently based on gender, countries are increasingly including gender considerations in their NDCs to ensure climate policies are more equitable, effective, and inclusive. This involves inclusive planning processes, gender-responsive targets, and considering the distinct needs, risks, and opportunities for women and men.

A gender-responsive NDC is a national climate plan that intentionally addresses and reduces gender inequalities in its climate policies and actions, going beyond simple sensitivity to actively promote gender equality. This involves incorporating gender analysis to identify gaps, setting gender-specific targets and actions in sectors like energy and agriculture, ensuring women’s participation in decision-making, and integrating gender-responsive financing. The goal is to create climate solutions that are more equitable, effective, and just¹⁶.

Integrating gender equality is crucial for upholding human rights and ensuring a just transition where no one is left behind. The International Court of Justice’s (ICJ) July 2025 advisory opinion on climate change strongly reinforces the principle of “leaving no one behind” by establishing legally binding obligations for states to protect vulnerable communities and mandating reparations for climate harm¹⁷.

Recognition of gender was greatly improved in the last round of NDCs. According to the UNFCCC, 85% of second-generation NDCs referenced gender compared to just 29% in first round¹⁸. Despite this, implementation is a challenge. The UNDP finds that only 23 of the 120 NDCs submitted by Climate Promise supported countries and territories in the last round consider

Asia:

Country	Date Submitted	Reference to Gender	Link to NDC Document
Singapore	10th February 2025	No mention of gender in the country reporting or text.	Click here
Japan	18th February 2025	There are two mentions of “gender” in Japan’s NDC 3.0, committing “towards the achievement of a sustainable society, Japan is proactively working to incorporate gender perspectives, including gender equal participation, into concrete actions while aiming at enhanced participation of women in policy decision-making processes for responding to environmental problems, including climate change, in line with ongoing international trends.”	Click here

indicators to explicitly track progress on gender, 18 commit to gender-responsive climate budgeting, and 21 commit to include gender in their climate finance strategies¹⁹.

Finance is critical, as the implementation of gender actions and targets will lag without adequate funding. Many NDCs include a single mention of gender or a commitment to women’s empowerment, but lack accompanying mitigation, adaptation or cross-cutting gender actions or targets. Gender targets in NDCs mostly relate to adaptation, particularly in agriculture, water management and disaster resilience.

2.1 NDC 3.0 Submissions from Asia and the Pacific

On the eve of COP30, 118 countries (59.9%) out of the 197 countries that are Parties to the UNFCCC had submitted their NDC 3.0. Out of these 118 countries, 26 (52%) Asia and the Pacific (including Australia and New Zealand) countries have submitted their NDC 3.0 of the 50 countries who are party from the region. There are approximately 50 countries in the Asia-Pacific region that are Parties to the UNFCCC, based on the list supported by the Regional Collaboration Centre (RCC)²⁰ for Asia and the Pacific. The exact number can vary slightly depending on the specific definition of “Asia-Pacific,” which can include countries from both Asia and Oceania.

Of the 26 Asia and the Pacific countries that have submitted their NDC 3.0, three countries do not mention “gender” in their NDC. (Analysis of China not done, given language barrier). 88.5% of all the NDCs that have been submitted from the region includes “gender” references which is higher than the global average that was noted in NDC 2.0. The table below outlines the NDC 3.0s submitted by Asia and the Pacific countries that were submitted till 10th November 2025.

Country	Date Submitted	Reference to Gender	Link to NDC Document
Maldives	27th February 2025	There are seven mentions of “gender” in Maldives NDC 3.0, with a strong reference to recognising gendered impacts of climate change and gender- responsive climate policy planning. The NDC 3.0 also includes a dedicated section on “Gender, Youth and Children” [ref: page 40].	Click here
Nepal	19th May 2025	There are eleven mentions of “Gender” in the country text. Of note is Nepal’s commitment to “Leaving No One Behind” and Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion approach. The NDC 3.0 outlines a section on GESI [ref page 35]. Nepal has also committed to the collection of gender- disaggregated data. [ref page 31]	Click here
Cambodia	8th August 2025	With a notable one hundred thirty-nine text references to “gender,” Cambodia’s NDC 3.0 demonstrates a gender- responsive commitment to fulfilling the country’s climate commitments. A section on Gender details the commitment to various GESI approaches in data, awareness, education and policy planning. [page ref 56]	Click here
Pakistan	24th September 2025	There are sixteen references to “Gender” in Pakistan’s NDC 3.0. This is the first time that Pakistan is referencing their National Climate Change Gender Action Plan [ref page 41] and has taken an approach rooted in GESI. [ref page 34]	Click here
Mongolia	24th September 2025	Mongolia’s NDC 3.0 makes twelve text reference to “Gender.” With acknowledgement to gender as a cross cutting issue and a need for gender- sensitive measures to address climate change. [ref page 34]	Click here
Sri Lanka	25th September 2025	Sri Lanka’s NDC mentions “gender” seventy times in text. Sri Lanka has various gender policies that inform their climate planning and policy-making. This NDC focuses on strengthening and maintaining the past progress in gender- responsive climate action.	Click here
Bangladesh	29th September 2025	Bangladesh has twenty references to “gender.” A notable stride is Bangladesh’s National Climate Change Gender Action Plan that was launched in 2024. This NDC notes, Bangladesh’s approach to GESI given its ccGAP. [ref page 36]	Click here
Kyrgyzstan	2nd October 2025	Kyrgyzstan’s NDC 3.0 references “Gender” forty-two times, recognising gender responsive climate action as a key element to realising inclusive climate adaptation and mitigation policies.	Click here
Malaysia	24th October 2025	Malaysia’s NDC 3.0 makes one in- text reference to “gender” noting gender as a cross cutting issue. [ref page 16]	Click here
Indonesia	27th October 2025	Indonesia’s NDC makes thirty references to “gender” with strong emphasis on GESI integration in its National Adaptation Plan (NAP) that is currently in development.	Click here
China	3rd November 2025	Analysis not done as NDC registry only contains Chinese language NDC document.	Click here

Country	Date Submitted	Reference to Gender	Link to NDC Document
Thailand	3rd November 2025	Thailand mentions “gender” two times in their text, making vague references to gender perspectives and gender-responsive considerations.	Click here
Uzbekistan	6th November 2025	There are eleven references to “gender” in Uzbekistan’s NDC 3.0. Of note is their acknowledgement to the lack of gender data and gender responsive climate action which is intended to be implemented in this cycle of the NDC.	Click here
Bhutan	10th November 2025	Bhutan mentions “gender” three times in their text, making vague references to gender- responsive considerations.	Click here

Oceania*:

**The term “Oceania” has been used here as Australia and New Zealand have been included in this list of countries alongside the Pacific Island Countries.*

Country	Date Submitted	Reference to Gender	Link to NDC Document
New Zealand	31st January 2025	No mention of gender in the country reporting or text.	Click here
Republic of Marshall Islands	10th February 2025	The RMI’s NDC3.0 has thirty- two mentions of gender, including a dedicated section to “Gender and Human Rights” [ref: pages 14, 15]. The RMI commits to gender-responsive policy planning and action including capacity strengthening and education for women and girls in climate initiatives. [Ref page 3,4,5].	Click here
Niue	17th July 2025	Niue has made twenty- five text references to “Gender.” There is gender- reference through the NDC 3.0 with acknowledgement of gendered-impacts of climate change, gender inequality rooted in climate planning and plans on enhancing gender and social inclusion in the next 10 years.	Click here
Solomon Islands	13th August 2025	The Solomon Islands NDC 3.0 makes seven text references to “gender,” mostly recognising the country’s contextual gender inequalities. There are no significant references to gender responsive climate action.	Click here
Australia	18th September 2025	Australia makes nine text references to “Gender” with a strong emphasis on their already existent Australia’s “Working for Women: A Strategy for Gender Equality” [ref page 21] and Australia’s “International Gender Equality Strategy.” [ref page 24]	Click here
Tonga	23rd September 2025	Tonga has twenty text references to “Gender” including a section on Gender. Tonga’s approach to preparing its third NDC has been inclusive, coordinated, and gender-responsive and socially inclusive, ensuring that the commitment reflects national priorities and the voices of stakeholders.	Click here

Country	Date Submitted	Reference to Gender	Link to NDC Document
Vanuatu	24th September 2025	Vanuatu's NDC 3.0 makes seventy-five in-text references to "Gender." Acknowledging to eliminate gender disparities through the recognition of gender equality and women's empowerment in all commitments, as well as by aligning with the UNFCCC's Enhanced Lima Work Program on Gender and its Action Plan and dozens of gender decisions under the Convention and the Paris Agreement. Vanuatu has a range of dedicated safeguards and regulations to overcome practical and cultural barriers to the participation of women, girls, and gender-diverse persons in climate action, including for example formally establishes gender quotas for the formal registration of Community Disaster and Climate Change Committees (CDCCCs) ensuring women and girls have a place in climate decision-making bodies; the National Advisory Board (NAB) encouraged practice of providing stipends and sitting allowances to women and girls who participate in climate planning workshops, ensuring financial barriers do not prevent engagement; the practice of scheduling community consultations and participatory processes at times and places that accommodate women's caregiving, educational and household responsibilities; the requirement that climate programme staff undergo gender equity and inclusion training with a focus on local cultural contexts; the enforcement of gender-based violence (GBV) prevention protocols and reporting mechanisms in all climate initiatives; training, extension, and outreach programs that utilise gender-sensitive materials; and the requirement for collection and reporting of gender, age, and disability-disaggregated data for all climate programmes.	Click here
Federated States of Micronesia	24th September 2025	FSM has twenty-nine text references to "Gender" with all adaptation measures designed with gender equality, disability, and social inclusion (GEDSI) at their core, ensuring that vulnerable groups are protected and empowered in the transition.	Click here
Tuvalu	26th September 2025	No mention of gender in the country reporting or text.	Click here
Fiji	6th November 2025	Fiji's NDC 3.0 mentions "gender" twenty times, incorporating the principles of intergenerational equity, gender equality, inclusivity, and social justice. These measures aim to increase access to information, technologies, and finance for vulnerable groups.	Click here

Whilst Asia and the Pacific countries are actively working to improve gender mainstreaming in their “new” NDCs. Significant number of Asia and the Pacific countries have robust gender policies, assessments, strategies and action plans in place that can inform this process. NDCs should align with both national and international gender policies and commitments and communicate a clear intent. Adequate funds should be allocated to engage gender experts and gender institutions, groups and organisations. In conducting this analysis, it was noted that governments are taking a layered approach to gender mainstreaming in NDC 3.0, integrating gender-responsive targets across mitigation and adaptation while leveraging just transition strategies to help ensure the benefits of the transition can be shared by all.

2.2 Country NDC Case Studies from Asia and the Pacific

To drive climate progress, NDCs should recognise women and girls not simply as among the climate vulnerable, but as powerful agents of change, essential to achieving our climate goals. Indigenous women, for example, play a leading role in environmental conservation, and therefore possess invaluable knowledge and expertise that can contribute to strengthening resilience and mitigate greenhouse gas emissions.

The following country case studies compiled demonstrate the layered approach that countries have taken to mainstream gender in climate adaptation and mitigation in the region.

Country Case Story: Bangladesh

Bangladesh's NDC 3.0 makes a strong commitment to inclusivity by embedding GEDSI as a cross-cutting principle. The NDC recognises that women, children, youth, and persons with disabilities are not just vulnerable groups but also agents of change, as it commits to inclusive institutional platforms and participatory processes. Furthermore, the NDC takes a human rights-based approach addressing the fundamental rights to clean environment, and the rights of diverse communities, minorities and women.

Adaptation is where Bangladesh's NDC 3.0 most clearly integrates gender considerations. Guided by the National Adaptation Plan (2023–2050), the NDC outlines sixty-five interventions across water, disaster management, agriculture, fisheries, ecosystems, and urban systems. Many of these have direct gender dimensions; for example, gender-sensitive cyclone shelters that address women's safety and dignity, climate-smart agriculture that can reduce the burden on women farmers. The NDC has a strong focus on loss and damage, estimating annual climate damages at around USD 3 billion.

While it recognises vulnerable groups, including women who bear the brunt of these impacts, the document does not yet provide detailed frameworks for gender-responsive recovery, relocation, or compensation.

On just transition, Bangladesh's NDC 3.0 is notable for explicitly naming women, youth, and informal workers as priority groups. It emphasises decent work, reskilling, and social protection as part of the transition away from carbon-intensive sectors. This is a progressive framing, but the challenge will be ensuring that women, often in the informal sector, are not sidelined in the shift to green jobs. Without targeted measures such as access to finance, training, and leadership roles, women risk being left behind in the very transition that is meant to deliver equity.

The NDC commits to inclusive governance and monitoring, promising participatory processes, GEDSI integration in institutional arrangements, and climate education that promotes green skills for youth and women. These provisions, if implemented, could help shift gender commitments from rhetoric to practice. Bangladesh has one of the most comprehensive, data-driven, and inclusive NDCs from developing countries. Yet like most, it falls short on transformational shift and needs an implementation roadmap. There is a need for strong systems to track results, define access to climate finance, and GEDSI disaggregated data to measure who benefits from adaptation projects. Participation is encouraged, but formal representation of vulnerable groups in national climate councils and sectoral planning is still missing. By combining adaptation priorities with GEDSI principles in finance, data, and governance, Bangladesh can set an example at COP30 of how climate resilience and gender equality can move forward together.

Country Case Story: Nepal

Nepal's Third Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC 3.0) places explicit emphasis on GEDSI as one of the Key Considerations for NDC Implementation. This marks a significant progression from the second NDC, where Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) was only lightly referenced under “others” without concrete targets. The shift from ‘GESI’ in NDC 2.0 to ‘GEDSI’ in NDC 3.0 throughout the document, shows a broader and more inclusive framing. It is important to note that women, youth, indigenous people, and persons with disabilities were part of the stakeholder process at multiple rounds and various levels. While this demonstrates diverse voices, the depth of influence and their decision-making role are not fully clear.

NDC 3.0 dedicates a robust section to GEDSI, outlining clear

targets and action plans such as the development of a GESI and climate change strategy, GEDSI-responsive adaptation planning, and provisions linked to Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE) and the Lima Work Programme. For the first time, the NDC also commits to GEDSI-disaggregated data and acknowledges gender-diverse demographics. However, while these commitments are ambitious, the pathways to achieve them remain vague, with extended timelines even for urgent measures. For example, while GEDSI units and focal points are to be institutionalised across government levels, with annual audits and disaggregated data systems by 2035, the timelines are long and the enforcement mechanisms unclear. The GEDSI section's placement toward the end of the document may make it seem like an afterthought, though its principles are integrated throughout the framework.

The expansion of electric and improved cookstoves directly addresses women's disproportionate exposure to indoor air pollution and the heavy burden of unpaid care work. Yet, the absence of explicit measures to ensure women's access to finance, training, and decision-making in the energy transition raises concerns that women may remain passive beneficiaries rather than active agents of change. Similarly, the forestry and land-use commitments are notable for mandating that 60% of forests remain under community-based management with 50% women's representation in leadership roles. This is a progressive step, but again lacks mechanisms to guarantee women's control over benefits.

On adaptation, NDC 3.0 institutionalises gender-responsive planning by requiring all 753 local governments to prepare GEDSI-responsive Local Adaptation Plans of Action (LAPAs) by 2035. This is a major advancement in embedding gender considerations into local governance. However, the effectiveness of this commitment will depend on whether adequate resources, technical capacity, and accountability systems are put in place. In agriculture, while the NDC highlights climate-resilient farming and agro-ecological systems, it does not sufficiently address structural barriers such as women's limited land rights, access to irrigation, or extension services, that are critical for equitable adaptation outcomes. In health and WASH, the NDC explicitly recognises women, children, and marginalised groups as priority beneficiaries of climate-resilient services, reflecting an understanding of the gendered burdens of caregiving and water collection.

The NDC also acknowledges that women and marginalised groups are disproportionately impacted by climate-induced disasters, and for the first time, it commits to collecting

gender-disaggregated data on loss and damage. However, the document remains thin on concrete mechanisms for gender-responsive compensation, relocation, or livelihood recovery. Nepal's NDC 3.0 makes a clear commitment to inclusivity, embedding GEDSI considerations across multiple sections, from climate finance to just transitions. Yet without strong mechanisms for implementation, monitoring, and accountability, these commitments risk remaining little more than hollow buzzwords. Even so, the fact that GEDSI is now explicitly named and integrated throughout the NDC, is a meaningful step forward. It creates an important opening for advocates to push for deeper action, demand resources, and hold institutions accountable, ensuring that climate action in Nepal is not only ambitious, but also actionable.

Country Case Story: Pakistan

Pakistan's NDC 3.0 acknowledges that climate change disproportionately impacts marginalised groups, including women, children, and the economically disadvantaged, but its approach to GEDSI is relatively modest. GEDSI is framed briefly as Strategic Imperatives for Implementation under the "Means of Implementation," yet it lacks the dedicated, detailed targets or institutional mechanisms. This makes GEDSI seen more like an add-on than a fully integrated driver of climate action.

Pakistan recognises that women, smallholder farmers, and urban poor are especially vulnerable to floods, droughts, and displacement. The NDC mentions gender-responsive adaptation planning, but lacks specifics on how it will operationalise gender mainstreaming to sustain long-term equity goals. While it highlights the need for resilience in agriculture, water, and disaster management, there is a stark absence of gender-disaggregated data, budgeting, or accountability mechanisms. Similarly, on loss and damage, Pakistan points to the devastating 2022 floods and their disproportionate impact on poor households, but it does not provide a gendered analysis despite the obvious heightened risks. It highlights the contributions of women in forestry and agriculture, and acknowledges the disproportionate burden during climate-induced displacement, food insecurity, and health risks. However, they are not addressed adequately and have insufficient disaggregated data on climate impacts.

Similarly, the NDC emphasises green skills development and the youth and women as a demographic opportunity. It has featured various youth-led and women-led initiatives and Nature-based Solutions (NbS) programs throughout, like the Ten Billion Tree Tsunami Programme, Local Conference of Youth, Miyawaki Urban Forests which have built capacities and resilience for

vulnerable groups, including women and youth. While the NDC recognises the importance of GEDSI, it may risk “tokenising” marginalised groups without concrete, implementable action plans.

Country Case Story: Mongolia

Mongolia's NDC 3.0 (2025) emphasises inclusive participation in mitigation and adaptation planning, explicitly committing to gender equality and the empowerment of women in climate governance. It notes the need to enhance women's participation at all levels of climate policy and decision-making. The NDC recognises women's leadership as key to effective community-based adaptation, particularly in rural and pastoral regions. Mongolia exhibits advanced gender mainstreaming through participatory governance and coordination mechanisms. The country needs clearer budgetary commitments and gender indicators to move from principle-based inclusion to measurable impact.

The NDC 3.0 strengthens institutional coordination under the Ministry of Environment and Tourism, integrating gender and social inclusion into climate planning. It establishes a cross-sectoral coordination committee that includes civil society and women's organisations as stakeholders in climate adaptation design.

Although Mongolia's NDC aligns with national green financing mechanisms, it lacks a specific gender budget. The NDC references the Green Development Policy's approach to financing community-based adaptation and livelihood diversification, which can indirectly benefit women.

The NDC 3.0 introduces a results-based monitoring framework that includes social inclusion indicators. However, the framework does not yet disaggregate data by gender, nor does it assign responsibility for tracking gender outcomes.

Overall, Mongolia's approach links gender equality with resilience building, positioning women as key actors in ecosystem-based adaptation. Although measurable gender targets are not specified, its participatory mechanisms and institutional coordination demonstrate advanced gender mainstreaming in comparison to many regional peers. Mongolia exhibits strong commitment through inclusive governance and coordination mechanisms; Yet, Mongolia requires clearer budgetary commitments and gender indicators to move from principle-based inclusion to measurable impact.

Country Case Story: Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan's Updated NDC (2023) includes gender-responsive adaptation measures that recognise women as key actors in agricultural adaptation and community awareness. It also commits to engaging civil society and women's organisations in adaptation initiatives. However, these participation commitments remain largely qualitative, with no gender quotas or formal mechanisms to ensure representation. Similarly, while the Strategy for Carbon Neutrality 2060 acknowledges the social dimensions of a low-carbon transition, it does not establish a gender-specific participation framework, reflecting a moderate level of integration.

Implementation of the NDC and Strategy is coordinated by the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, supported by inter-agency working groups that promote cross-sector collaboration. Despite this coordination, gender mainstreaming is not institutionalised, there is no gender focal point, capacity-building plan, or accountability mechanism. Institutional frameworks recognise the importance of inclusion but lack clear linkage to gender expertise or monitoring structures.

Financially, the Strategy estimates more than USD 610 billion in investment toward carbon neutrality, yet there is no earmarked funding for gender or social inclusion. Budget allocation remains sector-based, focusing on energy efficiency, renewables, and agriculture, without evidence of gender-responsive budgeting or dedicated mechanisms to enhance women's access to climate finance.

On data and accountability, Kazakhstan's NDC outlines the development of a national Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) system but does not include gender-disaggregated indicators.¹ Progress tracking focuses primarily on emissions and technical adaptation outcomes rather than participation or equity. Consequently, gender accountability remains weak, and the impact of climate policies on women's empowerment is not measured.

Overall, Kazakhstan demonstrates moderate gender integration, its climate policies recognise gendered vulnerabilities and inclusion principles but lack operationalisation through indicators, budgets, or institutional structures. Strengthening future efforts will require embedding gender considerations within MRV systems, institutional frameworks, and financing mechanisms to translate commitments into measurable outcomes.

Country Case Story: Fiji

As a Small Island Developing State (SIDS), Fiji is highly susceptible to rising sea levels, intensifying coastal erosion, and extreme weather events that trigger and intensify internal displacement. This can lead to loss of land and livelihood, Indigenous knowledge, practices, and identity.

While the impact of climate change is widespread, it is not gender-neutral.

ARROW and the Pacific Centre for Peacebuilding (PCP) conducted a scoping study²¹ from October 2023 to February 2024, which produced findings and recommendations on the intersections of climate change and SRHR in three (3) main community convenings across 5 provinces (Ra, Naitasiri, Tailevu, Serua, and Nadroga), with 62 women participants representing both I-Taukei and Indo-Fijian groups.

The study revealed that extreme weather events like cyclones severely impact women's access to health services. During disasters, women naturally prioritise the survival, protection, and welfare of their families but not themselves. They often neglect their personal needs, such as packing birth control pills and sanitary products during evacuation, which could lead to unwanted pregnancies, as well as unhygienic and unsafe personal care.

In rural and coastal communities, prolonged droughts, flooding, and soil salinity have undermined agricultural productivity, forcing women to travel farther for water and threatening income from small-scale farming and crafts.

The findings from the PCP scoping study illustrate women's lived experiences of climate impacts such as health, livelihoods, and SRHR. It's a reflection of the bigger policy challenges to help address the linkages between the gendered impact of climate change.

The development of Fiji's NDC 3.0 followed principles of inclusiveness, transparency, and collaboration as required by the Climate Change Act 2021, which mandates public participation, including women, youth, persons with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups, and emphasises the integration of Traditional Knowledge from Indigenous Peoples.

Its mitigation and adaptation measures also incorporate the principles of intergenerational equity, gender equality, inclusivity, and social justice to increase access to information, technologies, and finance for vulnerable groups. For example,

utilising climate-smart agriculture to institutionalise women's participation, establishing youth-led agribusiness incubators, and empowering communities through reforestation efforts on their land.

- **Jobs & Economic Opportunities:** Fiji's NDC 3.0 integrates gender and climate through climate-smart agriculture (CSA) and youth-led agribusiness initiatives. It aims to empower women and youth by enhancing food security, creating resilient livelihoods, and promoting sustainable economic opportunities.
- **Leadership, Participation & Decision-Making:** Fiji's NDC followed inclusive and transparent principles, engaging women, youth, persons with disabilities, and Indigenous groups. Institutional arrangements include gender focal points and inclusive feedback mechanisms.
- Meanwhile, the PCP study revealed that many women were unaware of the NDC or the link between climate and SRHR, underscoring the information and participation gap between national commitments and local realities.
- **Women's Empowerment & Social Inclusion:** The NDC embeds gender equality, inclusivity, and social justice. It increases access to climate finance and integrates gender-disaggregated data for gender-responsive budgeting.
- **Health & Well-Being:** While not explicit in the NDC, health co-benefits arise from climate-smart agriculture and social inclusion, improving nutrition and resilience. Climate-induced disasters disrupt access to contraceptives, maternal care, and hygiene supplies. Rising heat, water scarcity, and displacement aggravate maternal and mental-health risks.
- **Intersectionality, Indigenous Knowledge & Youth:** The NDC integrates participation from Indigenous communities, youth, and persons with disabilities, recognising Traditional Knowledge in adaptation strategies.

While there is relative progress in terms of social inclusion and implicit gender language, it is a step ahead of the previous NDC. With the ever-increasing threat of climate change in Fiji, alternative and community-led solutions and pushback are key to turn commitments into action.

PCP's approach highlights several best practices that bridge grounded realities with national climate policy. Through the use of the Talanoa dialogue method, PCP created safe and inclusive spaces for women to share lived experiences of climate change and SRHR challenges, transforming storytelling into a powerful advocacy tool.

The study also demonstrated the importance of localising policy engagement, leveraging leadership skills, and building inter-

ethnic and intergenerational solidarity among women's groups such as Soqosoqo Vakamarama-i-Taukei and TISI Sangam. The multi-faceted approach of combining participatory research, policy awareness, and capacity building symbolises that community-led advocacy can help shape climate policy frameworks and ensure that women are recognised not only as beneficiaries but as active agents of change in Fiji's climate resilience agenda.

This demonstrates that climate action cannot be achieved through policy design alone—it must be lived, practiced, and continually informed by the realities of those most affected. It underscores how women's participation, storytelling, and local leadership transform abstract climate commitments into grounded, human-centered priorities. From using the Talanoa method to engage diverse voices to strengthening community capacities in SRHR and disaster preparedness, these approaches embody a holistic model of climate advocacy—one that links health, equity, and resilience as inseparable components of sustainable development.

Country Case Story: Philippines

As one of the most climate-vulnerable countries in the world, the Philippines faces compounding crises of erratic weather events, coastal erosion, displacement, and food insecurity. With more than 20 tropical cyclones²² striking annually, these environmental stresses deepen pre-existing gender inequalities and affect women's and young people's access to health services, livelihoods, and participation in decision-making.

The 2023 Scoping Study on SRHR and Climate Change in the Philippines (The Study)²³ conducted by LILAK and ARROW, found that, while national frameworks increasingly recognise the link between gender and climate, on-the-ground implementation remains disconnected. Many women reported barriers to sexual and reproductive health services during disasters and displacement, with limited access to contraception, safe birthing environments, and psychosocial support.

Last October 11, the webinar in the form of a focused group discussion (FGD) entitled "Filipino Youth Speak: Localizing Climate Justice in the Philippines" (Youth FGD) co-organised with CONEQT Ph, PATH Foundation Philippines, Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights (WGNRR), and LILAK (Purple Action for Indigenous Women's Rights), gathered youth leaders aged 18–33 representing grassroots, Indigenous, and health networks to localise the conversation on climate action through feminist and intersectional approaches.

On the topic of policy priorities, Ali Payag Musa from the Bangsamoro Student Organization shared During the FGD, "Climate action is not just about policies; it's about humanity and collective survival." Youth advocate Jetro G. Resonar of YouRHealth MisOr emphasised, "The most important health impacts to discuss are reproductive and mental-health issues brought about by climate change." These reflections show how young Filipinos are reframing climate policy discussions to center care, compassion, and bodily autonomy as core dimensions of resilience.

Shar Balagtas of LILAK also said in her presentation that "Indigenous women are disproportionately affected by the climate crisis, which adds to the burden of unrecognised care work and raises the risk of hunger and physical and mental illness." She highlighted that adolescent pregnancy remains higher among Indigenous girls. These realities show that climate change intensifies gender-based vulnerabilities and demands that reproductive health, education, and Indigenous women's leadership become central to climate justice.

The Parabukas Philippine NDC Enhancement Study (2025)²⁴ observes that the country's 2021 NDC update, with a commitment of 75% emissions reduction and avoidance targets by 2030, marks progress in integrating social inclusion, just transition, and participatory governance. However, the study also emphasises that SRHR is not explicitly referenced in either the mitigation or adaptation components. Parabukas recommends that "future NDC iterations should translate gender language into sectoral targets and indicators, particularly across health, agriculture, and community resilience."

Further to this, the NDC's implementation shows the uneven participation of women, youth, and Indigenous peoples in climate governance structures. This gap reinforces what The Study and Youth FGD2025 reveal that gender equality is acknowledged at the policy level, but meaningful inclusion and local implementation remain largely on paper.

- **Jobs & Economic Opportunities:** The NDC prioritises agriculture and energy as key mitigation sectors, but Parabukas (2025) notes that climate finance and green jobs are still heavily centralised. The Study notes that rural women farmers face challenges in accessing sustainable livelihood programs and land tenure.
- **Leadership, Participation & Decision-Making:** The Philippine NDC calls for a whole-of-society approach, encouraging engagement from civil society and youth.

Yet, as Sophie Marie Delfin of MentorHealth expressed from the Youth FGD, “proper inclusion in climate policy spaces should be addressed and not just tokenistic representation.” Many youth leaders agreed, stressing the importance of making decisions together, and The Study suggests that women and Indigenous communities should be included in national and local climate councils to make sure that adaptation plans fit their specific needs.

- **Women’s Empowerment & SRHR:** While the NDC references social inclusion, neither it nor the National Climate Change Action Plan (NCCAP) directly mentions SRHR. The LILAK 2023 Scoping Study recommends integrating reproductive health and rights within adaptation and disaster preparedness programs, recognising that climate change affects pregnancy outcomes, family planning access, and gender-based violence. Balagtas pointed out that “the impacts of the climate crisis contribute to child marriage and adolescent pregnancy,” emphasising SRHR-centered adaptation frameworks.
- **Health & Well-Being:** Climate-induced disasters disrupt access to contraceptives, maternal health care, and safe shelter. Both the PATH Foundation Philippines in the Youth FGD and The Study emphasise that climate resilience requires strengthening the health sector’s preparedness. Mental health was also a recurring theme in the youth discussions, linking psychosocial well-being with inclusive participation and safe spaces for young people.
- **Intersectionality, Indigenous Knowledge & Youth:** Indigenous communities remain among the most affected by climate impacts and mining-related displacement. As highlighted by LILAK in Youth FGD, 26% of transition mineral mining areas overlap with ancestral domains, threatening both ecosystems and Indigenous women’s rights. Advocates called for “genuine Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC)” processes and the protection of Indigenous women human rights defenders. A youth representative from Nisa Ul Haqq fi Bangsamoro stressed that young Indigenous women must be recognised as leaders in adaptation and local knowledge transfer.

Filipino youth and women’s groups are redefining advocacy by making climate communication personal and intersectional. The Study identified similar good practices through feminist participatory research, community organising, and storytelling as a tool for advocacy to bridge technical policy discussions with grassroots realities.

The Philippine experience highlights that while gender and social inclusion are gaining ground in public discourse, SRHR remains a missing link in the NDC and related climate policy

spaces and frameworks. Integrating SRHR explicitly with climate adaptation, would strengthen resilience and adaptation efforts in response to climate challenges. The shared leadership of women, youth, and Indigenous communities demonstrates how climate justice is continually redefined through broader collective action.

Country Case Story: Malaysia

As an upper-middle-income country²⁵ with some of the most important biodiversity hotspots²⁶ in the world, Malaysia faces the complex challenge of balancing economic growth with climate and environmental sustainability. The country’s diverse geography makes it highly vulnerable to the impacts of extreme weather, flooding, and deforestation.

Despite the country’s rich land and natural resources, the KAMY Policy Paper on Women, Gender and Climate Governance in Peninsular Malaysia (2025) (The Policy Paper) found that women, especially those in low-income and Indigenous communities, often face unequal access to information, resources, and representation in decision-making spaces related to climate and environmental policy.

While Malaysia has made strides in environmental governance, women’s leadership in climate-related institutions remains limited. Stressing the importance of intersectional climate justice, which accounts for women’s overlapping roles in sociocultural, economic, and environmental spheres.

Locating Gender and Climate in Malaysia’s NDC

Malaysia’s NDC 2.0 was submitted to the UNFCCC in July 2021, outlining an unconditional economy-wide reduction of 45% in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, marking an ambitious increase of 10% from the earlier 2015 submission.

The NDC identifies adaptation priorities across water resources, agriculture, health, forestry, and biodiversity. It emphasises inclusivity through “inter-ministerial and stakeholder consultations engaging NGOs, the private sector, academia, and local communities in a gender-responsive manner.” It also stated that Malaysia will “continue to mainstream gender, youth, and vulnerable groups in adaptation and disaster risk reduction programs.” Despite this, the NDC does not explicitly address SRHR.

- **Jobs & Economic Opportunities:** The KAMY (2025) study highlights that women remain underrepresented in the green economy and energy transition sectors, despite their vital role in sustainable livelihoods. The

Star (2025)²⁷ reported Malaysia's target of reducing 30 million tonnes of CO₂ emissions by 2035 through the National Energy Transition Roadmap²⁸, emphasising private sector involvement in decarbonisation. However, this policy narrative did not prominently feature gender considerations.

- **Leadership, Participation & Decision-Making:** Malaysia's NDC preparation process involved multi-stakeholder consultations, yet KAMY (2025) found that women's organisations were often invited as observers rather than as co-decision-makers. The study calls for institutional mechanisms that ensure women's active participation in national and subnational climate bodies. Participants emphasised that "true participation means having the power to shape agendas, not just to attend meetings."
- **Women's Empowerment & Social Inclusion:** Malaysia's adaptation plan under its NDC identifies gender, youth, and vulnerable groups as focus areas, but gaps persist in translating this commitment into implementation.
- **Health & Well-Being:** The Malaysia NDC (2021) highlights the need to "expand public health management of future climate risks" and to "strengthen surveillance and early warning systems" for climate-sensitive diseases. These measures contribute to broader health resilience but do not specifically address SRHR.
- **Intersectionality, Indigenous Knowledge & Youth:** The intersection of gender, age, and Indigenous identity defines much of Malaysia's climate justice landscape. EcoKnights have even noted in 2020 that "9 out of 10 youth in Malaysia are already taking individual action to address climate change," marking an increasing interest among Malaysian youth in climate action²⁹.

Grassroots organisations and youth collectives in Malaysia exemplify feminist climate leadership. KAMY's "Women's Assembly for Climate Justice" model uses intergenerational dialogues to build solidarity across rural and urban contexts. Their campaigns also highlight the gendered dimensions of energy transition and call for accountability in climate financing and corporate climate pledges.

Malaysia's updated NDC demonstrates increased ambition and policy alignment with the Paris Agreement, but gender integration remains largely at the level of consultation rather than measurable implementation. The inclusion of women, youth, and Indigenous voices in climate decision-making will be key to advancing a more equitable national climate agenda. Youth and Gender Responsive Action: DoCC has a gender balance in the middle and senior management positions (50%).

Climate Council hosted around 1500 participants with 50% female. One of the sub-commissions focused solely on gender issues.

3. 0 CONCLUSION

Asia and the Pacific stands at a defining moment as the world moves toward COP30 in Belém, a COP positioned to shift global climate action from negotiation to meaningful implementation. The region's demographic diversity, its disproportionate exposure to climate impacts, and its deep social and economic inequalities make it both uniquely vulnerable and uniquely pivotal to global climate progress. Climate change is already reshaping lives across the region, through rising temperatures, food insecurity, migration, and persistent threats to health and well-being and these impacts are profoundly gendered. Women, girls, Indigenous peoples, and marginalised communities face heightened risks while also carrying invaluable knowledge and leadership essential for resilience.

Across the region, the third cycle of NDCs reveals growing awareness of these realities. Countries are increasingly integrating gender equality, disability inclusion, and social justice into climate planning, with several demonstrating ambitious commitments, comprehensive gender analyses, and strengthened governance systems. Yet, the depth and effectiveness of gender mainstreaming remain uneven. While some NDCs include detailed strategies, gender indicators, and participatory mechanisms, others provide only high-level references or lack concrete pathways for implementation, monitoring, and accountability. Persistent gaps, such as limited gender-responsive budgeting, lack of disaggregated data, weak institutional mandates, and inadequate integration of sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) continue to hinder transformative progress.

At the same time, the case studies across Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, Mongolia, Kazakhstan, Fiji, the Philippines, and Malaysia illustrate a region actively experimenting with layered, context-specific approaches to inclusive climate action. They highlight both the promise and the challenges of translating gender commitments into practice. Some countries are building community-driven adaptation systems, elevating Indigenous knowledge, embedding gender targets in sectoral plans, and pursuing just transition strategies that prioritise women, youth, and informal workers. Others are only beginning to institutionalise gender considerations and still lack the structures, resources, and political backing needed to ensure meaningful impact.

COP30 presents an unparalleled opportunity to convert these emerging commitments into decisive action. With new NDCs due, an expanded Gender Action Plan under the Lima Work Programme, strengthened global expectations for accountability following the first Global Stocktake, and a renewed climate finance architecture, countries can no longer afford gender-blind or partially integrated approaches. The convergence of these processes provides a chance for Asia and the Pacific to showcase leadership by aligning national strategies with robust gender policies, strengthening institutional capacities, and ensuring that financing and implementation reflect the lived realities of communities most affected by climate change.

For this transformation to occur, governments must prioritise gender equality as a core driver and not an accessory of climate ambition. This requires investing in gender-responsive institutions, embedding SRHR and protection from gender-based violence within climate frameworks, strengthening data systems, expanding civic space, and recognising women, youth, and Indigenous communities as essential agents of change. Equally important is ensuring that climate finance mechanisms, both domestic and international, are accessible to grassroots organisations and women-led groups whose localised knowledge is critical for just and resilient outcomes.

Ultimately, the path to a climate-resilient Asia and the Pacific depends on centring equity, care, and social justice in every stage of climate planning and implementation. COP30 offers a historic moment to elevate the region's collective voice and demonstrate how gender-responsive, people-centred climate action can produce stronger, fairer, and more sustainable results. By seizing this moment, countries can help safeguard the rights, health, and futures of the region's billions and contribute meaningfully to global efforts to keep the 1.5°C goal alive while leaving no one behind.

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