

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

**AN EAST AND
SOUTHERN AFRICA REVIEW**

Sexual and reproductive health and rights and rights-based approaches in national climate documents: **A review of Nationally Determined Contributions since 2020 in East and Southern Africa**



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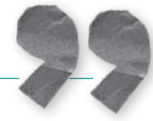
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FOREWORD



Climate change is triggering a cascade of environmental challenges that have substantial impacts on East and Southern Africa – with women and girls bearing the heaviest burden and experiencing the most severe consequences.

We have witnessed in this region an increase in cyclones, extended periods of drought, severe floods, invasions of locusts, heightened water stress and mounting food insecurity. These factors collectively contribute to the strain on essential health care infrastructure, resulting in substantial disruptions to the availability of crucial sexual and reproductive health services, and life-saving resources.

Without the immediate implementation of urgent and rigorous measures to facilitate climate adaptation and bolster resilience among front-line communities, the prospect of attaining the three transformative goals of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in the region by 2030 – namely, ending preventable maternal deaths, unmet family planning needs, gender-based violence (GBV) and harmful practices – remains uncertain. In 2015, 196 countries adopted the Paris Agreement with the ambition of tackling climate change through voluntary national commitments, known as Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). Following the first NDC review in 2021, UNFPA, the United Nations sexual health and reproductive agency, in partnership with Queen Mary University of London, supported several countries in the region to ensure their NDC updates reflected the impacts of climate crises on women and young people.

This second review of countries' NDCs highlights the progress they have made since producing their first NDCs, as well as existing gaps and opportunities to strengthen national climate action strategies that deliver for women and young people. This places UNFPA in a strong strategic position to support countries in the next round of NDC updates in 2025. We have since joined the Africa NDC Hub, convened by the African Development Bank, to strengthen our support for countries working with critical regional partners.



At the core of the work UNFPA does on climate adaptation and resilience are the rights-focused, gender-sensitive and people-centred approaches that have underpinned this review. The findings will help shape our programmatic work at the country level to support countries in delivering on their commitments and proposed interventions where they already exist and help create new commitments where they are currently lacking.

This study comes at a critical time, one year ahead of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD30). It will accompany us on our journey to that event, as we strive to bring climate adaptation and resilience priorities for women and girls into the ICPD process, and ICPD priorities into climate change processes.

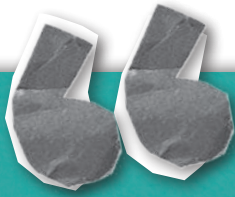
We need to take immediate action to empower women and youth in building communities that can withstand the challenges of a constantly shifting climate. At UNFPA, we remain unwavering in our dedication to fulfilling this promise to the communities we serve, offering steadfast support until a climate-resilient world ensures the safety and prosperity of all women and girls.

Lydia Zigomo

Regional Director, UNFPA East and Southern Africa

Abbreviations

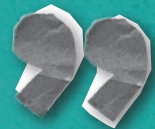
COP	Conference of the Parties
ESA	East and Southern Africa
GAP	Gender action plan
GBV	Gender-based violence
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
LGBTQIA+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, intersex, asexual and more
NAP	National adaptation plan
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
NGCCFP	National Gender and Climate Change Focal Point
SOGIESC	Sexual orientation, gender identity and expression and sex characteristics
SRHR	Sexual and reproductive health and rights
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund



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 effects on maternal and neonatal health outcomes, which can be more severe for populations

facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. Climate-related events can jeopardize access to clean water and essential supplies for safe births and personal hygiene. A clear example is the El Niño-induced drought in Mozambique of 2016, which resulted in scarcity not only of clean water but also of a local source of absorbent plant material specifically used in the production of menstrual products for girls and women (CARE International, 2016).

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 effects, 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).

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, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities and coastal and rural populations), and in areas where access to services may already be limited (e.g. humanitarian settings and areas affected by conflict).

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 take part 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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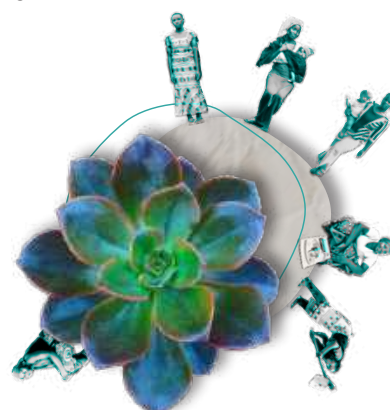
The recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report found that “the vulnerability of ecosystems and people to climate change differs substantially among and within regions, [...] driven by patterns of intersecting socioeconomic development” and other structural inequalities (IPCC, 2022). 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 East and Southern Africa

Burdened by increasing frequency and intensity of droughts, floods, tropical cyclones and a predicted increase in intense rainfall and higher wind speeds, the East and Southern Africa (ESA) region is facing intensifying climate change impacts, exacerbating the risk of spread of infectious diseases, food insecurity, malnutrition and water stress (IPCC, 2022). The IPCC 2022 report, *Impacts, Vulnerability, and Adaptation*, shows that tens of millions more people will be exposed to increased distribution and seasonal transmission of vector-borne diseases, including malaria, dengue and Zika at 1.5°C of global warming in the region (IPCC, 2022). Disease outbreaks such as cholera, which have been shown to increase with rising temperatures, have been more frequent in the region following tropical cyclones. In the ESA region, 62 million people, and another 45.1 million people in the Horn of Africa, needed humanitarian assistance between 2015 and 2019 due to climate-induced food emergencies (IPCC, 2022).

Climate change is exacerbating the risk of malnutrition in the region, posing a greater risk to children and pregnant women. With more than 250 million people malnourished, East Africa is one of the three regions in Africa at greatest nutritional risk from rising sea temperatures causing reduced fish catch in coastal waters (IPCC, 2022). With hundreds of millions of people across the continent living in poverty, climate change is projected to widen the inequalities between African countries, with East Africa expected to be one of the worst hit by the negative impacts. A World Bank study projects that 132 million people will be pushed into extreme poverty by 2030 due to climate change, with sub-Saharan Africa having the largest share of that number (World Bank Group, 2020). The accelerating decline in agricultural yields due to climate change will become one of the major drivers of this poverty and migration within ESA.

The region is also facing increasing invasion by destructive pests in recent years. The recent locust invasions in East Africa have been linked to climate impacts, specifically ocean warming, with future occurrences predicted. Climate emergencies in ESA come with massive implications for the protection and health of women and girls, including increased risk of GBV, child marriage and other harmful practices (Lowcock and Kanem, 2020).





Sexual and reproductive health and rights, gender-based violence and harmful practices in East and Southern Africa

The ESA region has made significant progress in advancing SRHR and eliminating GBV, and has the second best-performing indicators across most parameters in Africa, second only to the North African region. However, those same indicators rank as some of the worse globally (Lowcock and Kanem, 2020), and in recent decades investment has been insufficient to address the growing and unmet needs of the population. ESA has one of the highest fertility rates of any region in the world at 4.28 births per woman, high maternal mortality rate and increasing cases of GBV and child marriage. The region has also seen its progress in ending HIV infections stall, especially among adolescents. The region requires more investment if it is to achieve all or any of the three UNFPA transformative results.

The maternal mortality rate in ESA, although improving, remains high at 398 deaths per 100,000 live births. On a country level, South Sudan has the world's highest rate of maternal mortality with 1,150 deaths per 100,000 live births. Burundi (548 deaths), Lesotho (544 deaths) and the United Republic of Tanzania (524 deaths) follow closely (World Bank, 2022). Current levels of unsafe abortion, at 2.5 million in East Africa and 155,000 in Southern Africa, are deeply concerning. This is in addition to pregnancy and childbirth-related deaths of 62,000 and 2,100 in each region, respectively (Guttmacher Institute, 2020). These figures are likely to worsen with the impacts of climate change unless there is targeted action and funding.

To achieve the second goal of the three transformative results, there is a need for more investment in family planning to address unmet needs. In East Africa, 51 million women of reproductive age want to avoid pregnancy, and there is an unmet need for modern contraceptives for 19 million (36 per cent) of these women. In Southern Africa, 11 million women want to avoid pregnancy, with 2.1 million (19 per cent) having unmet needs for modern contraceptives (Guttmacher Institute, 2020).

Ending GBV is critical for women and girls in the ESA region, which has high rates of sexual violence against women and girls (UNFPA, 2022a). Of the four conflict and post-conflict countries with the highest rate of sexual violence in the region, namely the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mozambique, Uganda and Zimbabwe (UNFPA, 2022a), two of them have been impacted by tropical cyclones at least once since 2019 (Mozambique and Zimbabwe). As emergencies and crisis situations are likely to exacerbate the rate of GBV, this rate is expected to increase with growing climate impacts unless more preventive measures are taken in preparation for climate-related disasters.

Child marriage represents another harmful practice already being exacerbated by climate change in the region (Plan International, 2021). In the ESA region, 27 per cent of women have given birth by the age of 18, the majority within marriage (UNFPA, 2022b). An increase in climate-induced emergencies will risk a rise in the cases of child marriage in the region as a means of reducing economic burdens, especially with floods, cyclones and droughts displacing more people.

The prevalence of HIV and AIDS in the region, especially among adolescent girls and young women, is a source of concern. Figures from 2015 show that ESA accounts for 46 per cent of new infections and 42 per cent of global AIDS-related deaths globally (WHO, 2017).





With the region having half of the global population living with HIV despite having only 6.2 per cent of the world's population, 90 per cent of new infections among young people and adults in the region are happening through sexual transmission. Estimates from 2019 show that 83 per cent of new HIV infections in the region were in adolescent girls aged 10–19 years (Ferguson, Mathur and Armstrong, 2021). There is a gap of unmet needs here that may worsen without matching investments.

As climate change impacts are predicted to increase in the region, health systems are not prepared for the new wave of challenges that this will pose. Addressing SRHR and GBV as an integral part of robust health system strengthening will be key not just in building the resilience of women and girls, but transforming a resilient health system that will withstand the impacts of climate change.

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 how 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 an opportunity to gain an overview of climate plans and challenges in each territory and an indication of levels of ambition over time. They also 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 ESA published in and after 2020.

This report adopts the broad definition of SRHR set out in the Gutmacher-*Lancet* report of 2018 (Gutmacher-*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. It also explored five other SRHR-related thematic areas: (1) health; (2) gender; (3) human rights, participation and consideration of 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. They 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 sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics (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 ESA region comprises 23 countries; however, only the 19 NDCs submitted since 2020 at the time of completion of the analysis in August 2022 were reviewed. Botswana, Eritrea, Lesotho and Madagascar submitted their first NDCs before 2020 and have not submitted an update since. Hence, they were not included in our analysis. See appendix 1 for a full list of countries and versions of NDCs included for review.

To ensure the inclusion of youth perspectives, 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 a similar development process. They were based in the five regions where UNFPA works. The young people selected from ESA produced a short report that provided 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 26–28).

The results of this report will provide an opening for dialogue at regional, national and local levels in the ESA region on the ways that climate change and SRHR and GBV intersect. The results will 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. Our analysis is limited to the information included in the NDCs.





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 NDCs shows that eight NDCs out of the 19 NDCs reviewed include issues related to SRHR and GBV (see figure 1 and table 1). Most of these references are centred around maternal and newborn health, HIV and AIDS and GBV. Specifically, there are three references to maternal health, three references to HIV and AIDS, one reference to adolescent health, one reference to sexual orientation, one reference to information and awareness and two references to GBV. There was no mention of harmful practices across the NDCs reviewed. Seychelles made references to more than one of these SRHR areas. The references vary by description of impact, intervention and other relevant mentions.

The analysis shows that while some countries only refer to aspects of SRHR and GBV in their country's situational analysis, others acknowledge the impacts of climate change on SRHR and GBV but without addressing specific

programmes or interventions. Some countries went beyond references to impacts to include a description of action and intervention related to the impacts of climate change on SRHR and GBV, including through the description of programmes or the inclusion of budget lines. However, this was a small number of countries and work is needed to support greater linkage of references to meaningful action.

There were six direct references to SRHR and GBV and harmful practices in the 2021 review of 50 NDCs (McMullen and others, 2021), including, one reference specifically to GBV and no reference to harmful practices. Although the 2021 review was global, it was primarily focused on countries in ESA, in which only two countries had references to SRHR. In this review, there are eight references to SRHR and GBV from countries in ESA, showing some progress in inclusion and prioritization of SRHR.

FIGURE 1: Number of Nationally Determined Contributions that integrate sexual and reproductive health and rights and gender-based violence issues out of the 19 Nationally Determined Contributions reviewed

8**countries integrate****sexual and reproductive
health and rights****19****total Nationally
Determined Contributions**



Photo: © UNFPA/Eduardo Soteras

Maternal and newborn health

Three countries (Angola, Seychelles and South Sudan) reference maternal and neonatal health. South Sudan reflects that climate change, heat exposure and malnutrition will increase infant and maternal mortality and birth complications and worsen maternal and child health overall (South Sudan NDC, 2021: p. 41), while Angola describes the reduction in HIV prevalence as positive for pregnant women and infants (Angola NDC, 2021: p. 20). Seychelles references reproductive, maternal, neonatal, child and adolescent health in regards to health systems strengthening (Seychelles NDC, 2021: p. 35).

Other references to sexual and reproductive health and rights

HIV and AIDS is referenced by three countries (Malawi, Namibia and Angola). Malawi mentions HIV and AIDS as one of its

six priorities captured under cross-cutting issues (Malawi NDC, 2021: p. 8), while Namibia references HIV and AIDS as one of the main causes of adult mortality (Namibia NDC, 2021: p. 22). Seychelles includes family-life education and comprehensive sexuality education as a measure to build climate resilience of young people (Seychelles NDC, 2021: p. 19). Seychelles is the only country where the references include clear measures to address gaps, including improving health management information systems to account for risks to maternal and neonatal health. Uganda mentions reproductive health care as part of the recipients of its proposed climate intervention on integrated health (Uganda NDC, 2022: p. 24).

Eswatini is the only country to reference SOGIESC, through the recognition of LGBTQIA+ people as a vulnerable group (Eswatini NDC, 2021: p. 9).



TABLE 1:
Key references to sexual and reproductive health and rights in Nationally Determined Contributions in East and Southern Africa

Angola	Population health: "Contributing to the population growth tendency is the declining of mortality in the country in recent years as a reflection of the increase of life expectancy at birth, decrease of juvenile mortality rates and lower HIV prevalence in pregnant women (despite existence of some provincial variation)." (p. 20)
Eswatini	Cross-cutting: "Climatic factors have affected Eswatini in multiple ways, exposing its population to problems ranging from food insecurity and livelihood loss to epidemics and mortality. However, these impacts are not equal as population segments are disproportionately affected by them. Eswatini has recognized several such vulnerable groups such as women, LGBTQI, rural population, elderly, disabled and youth to name a few. The interests of these vulnerable groups are protected through a series of cross-cutting actions." (p. 8)
Malawi	"In 2016, Malawi adopted the National Climate Change Management Policy [...] which provides strategic direction for the country's priorities for climate change interventions through six priority areas ... : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Climate change adaptation; ● Climate change mitigation; ● Capacity building, education, training and awareness; ● Research, technology development and transfer and systematic observation; ● Climate financing; and ● Cross-cutting issues (including gender considerations, population dynamics and HIV and AIDS.)" (p. 8)
Namibia	Health: "The main causes of adult mortality are AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. Since these diseases often co-occur, it is difficult to establish the exact cause of death. Climate change is already exacerbating the causes of infant and adult mortality, and this will likely worsen in the future." (p. 22)
Seychelles	"Encourage life skills and family-life education that integrates comprehensive sexuality education as a key part of building climate resilience among young people especially in vulnerable communities prone to climate impacts." (p. 19) "Improving the Seychelles health management information systems to incorporate indicators of climate stress linked to major health impacts, including those related to reproductive, maternal, neonatal, child and adolescent health." (p. 35) "Ensuring that health systems strengthening and related financing for climate resilience takes into account risks to maternal and neonatal health and takes measures to reduce these risks." (p. 35) "Committing to strengthening the capacity of health systems to protect and improve population health that meets SRHR needs of women and young people in an unstable and changing climate." (p. 35) "Ensuring that climate-related vulnerability assessments and actions take into account sexual and reproductive health and gender-based violence risks and protective measures and are informed by disaggregated population data." (p. 36)
South Sudan	"South Sudan also has the world's highest maternal mortality rate; 1 in 7 women die from childbirth or pregnancy. Infant mortality rates are also exceptionally high, with 75 children per 1,000 dying before their first birthday. It is believed that climate change will further increase infant and maternal mortality and birth complications and exacerbate poor reproductive health in tropical developing countries. In particular, the effect of infectious diseases, extreme environmental conditions, malnutrition and heat exposure will lead to serious health risks for mothers and children. Thus, the overall impact of climate change on the population of South Sudan will be detrimental as it will lead to extreme weather events, increased infectious diseases and poor maternal and child health." (p. 41)
Uganda	"Implement integrated health-related climate interventions considering policies on water and sanitation, education, social protection and reproductive health care." (p. 24)

Gender-based violence

Two countries (the Comoros and Seychelles) reference GBV (see table 2). Seychelles explicitly commits to meeting the SRHR needs of women and young people and ensuring vulnerability assessments also capture GBV and SRHR risks (Seychelles NDC, 2021: p. 36), while the Comoros includes measures to address abuse, violence and sexual exploitation of children and women (the Comoros NDC, 2021: p. 11).

Harmful practices

The NDCs reviewed in the region recorded no mention of harmful practices. This could appear surprising given documented evidence and recent research showing the emerging impacts of climate change on drivers of child marriage and female genital mutilation.



TABLE 2: All references to gender-based violence in Nationally Determined Contributions in East and Southern Africa	
The Comoros**	Gender and climate change: “The National Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan has taken gender into account in the education and protection sector, which should result in the establishment of mechanisms for monitoring and raising awareness among the populations displaced from different forms of abuse, violence and sexual exploitation, prevention of abuse, violence and sexual exploitation of children and women, proper care for each of the vulnerable groups identified by providing the human resources and essential materials and the establishment of basic protection and supervision structures adapted and accessible to vulnerable groups, in particular women and children.” (p. 11)
Seychelles	“Ensuring that climate-related vulnerability assessments and actions take into account sexual and reproductive health and GBV risks and protective measures and are informed by disaggregated population data.” (p. 36)

** Indicates that the text has been translated from its source language into English for this report.



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Health

References to health were found in all 19 NDCs, with 18 referencing extreme weather events and/or disasters. Floods and droughts were noted to increase the spread

of waterborne diseases and cholera outbreaks by Zimbabwe (2021: p. 8; see box 1) and damage infrastructure, including hospitals by Mozambique (2021: p. 29), which was linked to food and water shortages by South Sudan (2021: p. 26) and Burundi (2021: p. 80).

FIGURE 2: Number of Nationally Determined Contributions that integrate health issues out of the 19 Nationally Determined Contributions reviewed

19
countries integrate
health

19
total Nationally
Determined Contributions

The Nationally Determined Contribution of Zimbabwe describes linkages between health and floods and droughts

BOX 1:

“Flooding and drought events increase the spread of waterborne diseases. A recent study (2018) identified that between 1990 and 2010, a cholera outbreak was registered in one of every three droughts and one of every 15 floods. In May 2009, 98,592 cases and 4,288 cholera deaths were reported, with 60 of the 62 districts in the country affected. This affects employees’ health and safety, and cause reductions in productivity across sectors (including agriculture, mining, energy, industry and commerce, tourism, and transport). In turn, reductions in productivity will lead to lower incomes and loss of livelihoods.” (p. 8)

“Impacts on health from heat-stress are also increasing, as a result of extreme temperatures, which may be particularly harmful to children and the elderly, partly because of their physiological predisposition and limited ability to manage their heat risk.” (p. 8)



All 19 countries reference early warning and/or health surveillance systems. Angola (2021: p. 35) and Eswatini (2021: p. 45) both commit to implementing an early warning system to strengthen the preparedness of the health sector to climate emergencies, with Angola providing a budget line for this adaptation measure (Angola NDC, 2021: p. 59). Ethiopia describes the integration of environment and health surveillance protocols to improve basic health services and emergency medical services, as well as a measure to improve early warning systems (Ethiopia NDC, 2021: p. 19), while the United Republic of Tanzania in its adaptation action proposes to strengthen early warning systems, monitoring, surveillance and reporting of climate-sensitive disease outbreaks (the United Republic of Tanzania NDC, 2021: p. 11).

The majority of countries (17 out of 19) recognize the health sector as vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, with Namibia (2021: p. 27; see box 2) and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (2021: p. 19) detailing a range of budgeted adaptation actions to address the vulnerability of their respective health sectors.

Most countries (17 out of 19) reference diseases, with vector-borne diseases mentioned in 12 countries, waterborne diseases in 10, respiratory diseases in five and diarrhoeal diseases in three NDCs. Angola (2021: p. 55) outlines an expected increase in diseases from climate change

while the Democratic Republic of the Congo (2021: p. 19), Malawi (2021: p. 54), Mozambique (2021: p. 39) and the United Republic of Tanzania (2021: p. 11) all list adaptation actions to address this. Mozambique details its development of an observatory for climate-sensitive diseases, including malaria, dengue, chikungunya, cholera and diarrhoea (Mozambique NDC, 2021: p. 39).

Nine countries acknowledge the impacts of climate change on access to health services and supplies. For example, South Africa (2021: p. 6) recognizes the impacts of climate change on access to services, especially for its vulnerable population, including older persons, children and women.

A crucial intervention reflected in seven NDCs is the need for further research into the health impacts of climate change. Seychelles (2021: p. 19) commits to undertake more research to further the understanding of climate and health trends and mentions a climate curriculum for professional health education programmes (Seychelles NDC, 2021: p. 34), while Angola (2021: p. 55) is clear that investment in knowledge on climate and health linkages will be key if it is to combat the spread of tropical diseases.

COVID-19 is referenced in 14 NDCs, largely in the context of slowing down action and depleting resources that otherwise could have been invested in other development plans, including climate action.

The Nationally Determined Contribution of Namibia describes linkages between health and climate change

BOX 2:

“Strengthen the capacity of health professionals in epidemic preparedness and response. Recruit and train community health workers to provide emergency first aid. Improve staff training on prevention and treatment of malnutrition. Enhance and further mainstream climate-related awareness. Improve access to timely and relevant information. Strengthen the policies required to effectively address both slow-onset and catastrophic events. Develop health-centred adaptation strategies. Climate-proof the public health system. Strengthen and provide capacity building for water and sanitation systems.” (p. 27)

Gender

Gender references feature in all 19 NDCs. Gender mainstreaming and gender responsiveness are the most common references, although the level of detail provided vary widely. Most countries (13 out of 19) describe gender in relation to vulnerability or disproportionate impact. Zimbabwe (2021: p. 11) describes the increased burden for women who have to walk long distances for water during periods of water scarcity. It also details their vulnerability to climate impacts since they represent most of the agricultural workforce, but their ability to diversify their income is restricted by limited education and access to markets (Zimbabwe NDC, 2021: p. 6). Zimbabwe also makes reference to its Revised National Gender Policy (2017), which recognizes that women are particularly vulnerable

to climate impacts (Zimbabwe NDC, 2021: p. 28). Mauritius unpacks how gender-related poverty can be worsened by extreme weather events, and includes a Marshall Plan Against Poverty Intervention as an adaptation measure (Mauritius NDC, 2021: pp. 11, 30–31). The gender analysis of Uganda affirms that women and girls, especially those living in poverty, were found to be at greater risk of climate change (Uganda NDC, 2022: p. 49). As one of its adaptation measures, Malawi commits to track indicators according to gender and other sources of vulnerability (Malawi NDC, 2021: p. 101). Burundi (2021: p. 93), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (2021: p. 80), Eswatini (2021: pp. 5, 8) and Seychelles (2021: p. 36) use the terms “vulnerable groups” or “population” to describe the impacts on women to target their interventions.

FIGURE 3: Number of Nationally Determined Contributions that integrate gender issues out of the 19 Nationally Determined Contributions reviewed

19
countries integrate
gender

19
total Nationally
Determined Contributions



Empowerment of women and capacity-building are critical in building adaptive capacity and resilience of affected communities. This is noted in 16 out of 19 countries that reference gender in relation to capacity-building and empowerment, especially in terms of social support, inclusion, training and agricultural skills. The Comoros describes how provision of rural energy resources will empower rural women (the Comoros NDC, 2021: p. 11), while Kenya (2020: p. 16) details a series of adaptation measures, including access to funds, technology transfer and innovation as interventions. Uganda describes its establishment of a climate action innovation challenge grant for women- and youth-led enterprises as part of the significant progress in gender integration in the updated NDC (Uganda NDC, 2022: p. 49).

Ten countries reflect the importance of women's involvement in decision-making. Eswatini commits to enhancing participation in decision-making and representation in a range of cross-cutting measures (Eswatini NDC, 2021: p. 9). South Sudan commits to a target of 35 per cent female representation in decision-making, and nominating a gender focal point from the Ministry of Environment and Forestry to help achieve this goal (South Sudan NDC, 2021: p. 149; see box 3).

Ethiopia describes an intervention to increase women's participation in the use and development of renewable energy (Ethiopia NDC, 2021: p. 36). Uganda commits to designating a gender and climate specialist or focal point across all ministries, agencies and local governments to help mainstream gender in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of NDC interventions (Uganda NDC, 2022: p. 49).

Nine countries capture the links between climate change and women's health. The vulnerability assessment of South Africa recognizes "rural livelihoods and outdoor labour, including women as the most exposed to extreme temperature hazards that lead to adverse effects such as heat stroke" (South Africa NDC, 2021: p. 6). Namibia commits to addressing climate-sensitive gender dimensions of health care, including mental health, as well as health-seeking behaviours and interventions to improve research on gender and health, while also detailing the work of its Environmental Fund to address research needs for health and gender (Namibia NDC, 2021: pp. 59–61). South Sudan explains its ongoing adaptation measures, including use of cooking stoves, that have co-benefits for women's health (South Sudan NDC, 2021: p. 149).

The Nationally Determined Contribution of South Sudan describes the importance of women's involvement in decision-making

BOX 3:

"Climate-related programmes that directly impact women's health and well-being are increasingly being taken up in the country (e.g., introducing improved cooking stoves, which contribute to a variety of benefits apart from emission reduction, such as energy security for the family and improved health due to a reduction in indoor air pollution)." (p. 149)

"Integrate a gender perspective into national level climate change policies and strategies. South Sudan will target 35 per cent representation of women in decision-making related to climate change." (p. 149)

"A gender focal point has been nominated from the Ministry of Environment and Forestry." (p. 149)

Population dynamics, human mobility and urbanization

All NDCs that were reviewed in this region included some reference to population dynamics. Fifteen countries include a description of the national population or aspects of its dynamics and 14 out of the 19 countries reference migration, urbanization or human displacement. Human displacement is described as the result of floods in Burundi (2021: p. 80) and Malawi (2021: p. 3)

and conflict and natural disasters in South Sudan (2021: p. 40). Burundi also describes migration to search for non-agricultural jobs (Burundi NDC, 2021: p. 91), while Zimbabwe mentions hosting 9,000 immigrants from climate-vulnerable countries (Zimbabwe NDC, 2021: p. 8) and describes how forced or voluntary migration worsens health as men and persons without disabilities leave women in rural areas behind (Zimbabwe NDC, 2021: p. 11).

FIGURE 4:

Number of Nationally Determined Contributions that integrate population dynamics issues out of the 19 Nationally Determined Contributions reviewed

19

include references of population dynamics

19

total Nationally Determined Contributions

FIGURE 5:

Number of Nationally Determined Contributions mentioning migration, urbanization and human mobility out of the 19 Nationally Determined Contributions reviewed

14

references of migration, urbanization and human mobility

19

total Nationally Determined Contributions



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Urbanization is mentioned in 12 out of the 19 NDCs. Ethiopia links rapid urbanization with increased emissions (Ethiopia NDC, 2021: p. 10), while South Africa describes its inability to rapidly deploy resilient infrastructure in the face of a growing urbanizing population (South Africa NDC, 2021: p. 7) and proposes to ensure climate change concerns are incorporated in urban planning and design (South Africa NDC, 2021: p. 10). Malawi includes an adaptation measure for managing urban migration (Malawi NDC, 2021: p. 81).

Ten countries reference population dynamics in relation to climate change. South Sudan mentions the contribution of population growth to greenhouse gas emissions (South Sudan NDC, 2021: p. 16). It also

highlights the impacts of over-extraction, deforestation (South Sudan NDC, 2021: p. 20) and the lack of decoupling of the country's economic growth from natural resources (South Sudan NDC, 2021: p. 17). Burundi (2021: p. 68) makes links between historical emission projections, the national economy and population growth. Angola details the impacts of population growth and the growth of its economy on transport sector emissions (Angola NDC, 2021: p. 26) and waste production in cities (Angola NDC, 2021: p. 37). Malawi describes the impacts of population growth on the increased demand for fish and reduced fish catches resulting from increasing numbers of fishermen (Malawi NDC, 2021: p. 4).



Youth

Nearly all (17 out of 19) NDCs reference youth and 10 countries consider youth as vulnerable. Some countries refer to youth as vulnerable in relation to unemployment, such as Angola (2021: p. 20), the Comoros (2021: p. 3), South Sudan (2021: p. 112) and Zimbabwe (2021: p. 15). Twelve NDCs mention youth participation, with various measures to ensure engagement (Namibia NDC, 2021:

pp. 43–54) mentions active participation of youth in sustainable forestry and details actions that can ensure meaningful participation of young people. These include the establishment of a youth climate working group and the development of a just transition strategy and a green job assessment model (Namibia NDC, 2021: p. 28; see box 4).

FIGURE 6: Number of Nationally Determined Contributions that integrate youth issues out of the 19 Nationally Determined Contributions reviewed





BOX 4:

The Nationally Determined Contribution of Namibia outlines interventions for youth participation in climate action

“Since young people and future generations will inherit the worst impacts of the climate crisis and bear the future costs of the decisions made today, Namibia recognizes that the youth are a driving force for higher climate ambition. The NDC implementation is set to provide employment opportunities and providing support for youth entrepreneurship [...] In the implementation phase of this NDC, detailed baseline gender/youth climate assessments and evaluations which include just transition strategies are to be conducted. These are to include priority sectors of AFOLU [Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use], agriculture, energy, waste and industrial processes and product use [...] Consequently, informed capacity building and planning for gender/youth-oriented climate actions and just transition training will be carried out in defined focal points.

Considerations are to be given to the following:

- Establishment of a gender/youth climate and risk management working group.
- Review of gender/review climate legal framework and policy.
- Develop and incorporate into NDCs gender/youth climate strategy.
- Development of a just transition strategy and a green job assessment model for Namibia.

To measure the impact of climate measures on key development indicators, such as GDP [gross domestic product], jobs, skills, revenue distribution and inequalities and gender inequality, a national Green Jobs Assessment Model will be developed. The assessment’s findings and process of multi-stakeholder dialogues will help Namibia foster evidence-based NDC policy-making and a just transition.” (p. 28)

Five NDCs reference youth in relation to health. Malawi mentions nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive practices in reference to adolescents and children (Malawi NDC, 2021: p. 60; see box 5), while Seychelles commits to strengthening the capacity of health systems to protect and improve health and meet the SRHR needs of young people as described

previously (Seychelles NDC, 2021: p. 35). Two countries, Namibia (2021: p. 43) and the United Republic of Tanzania (2021: p. 5), make reference to youth in relation to future generations, largely about the impacts of climate change that they will inherit and the need to protect the planet for them.



The Nationally Determined Contribution of Malawi describes youth in relation to health

BOX 5:

“Increased adoption of improved nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive practices. Nutrition assessment, counselling and support services linked to livelihoods targeting adolescents, adults, and children.” (p. 60)

More than half of NDCs (10 out of 19) mention youth in relation to education and awareness, with environmental education and capacity-building the most prominent themes. South Sudan commits to integrating climate change into the school curricula to help increase youth awareness (South Sudan NDC, 2021: p. 27). Mauritius discusses its awareness and communication strategy adopted for the development of the NDC that targeted stakeholders, including youths, and was translated into Creole (Mauritius NDC, 2021: p. 11).

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.





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.

For this review, UNFPA consulted with young people from the UNFPA Joint Youth Working Group on SRHR and Climate Change and YOUNGO throughout the development of this report. The aim of the consultation was to bring in young people's lived experiences from the region to capture youth perspectives of 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.

The youth reviewer from ESA is **Imali Ngusale**, a member of the Joint Youth Working Group on SRHR and Climate Change in Kenya. She is a contemporary feminist, PhD student and an international relations and communications strategist with years of experience in gender analysis, climate action and gender mainstreaming research. She has over 13 years' experience in designing and implementing

reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health and nutrition programmes in East Africa. Ms. Ngusale reviewed five countries in the ESA region: the Comoros, Kenya, Namibia, Seychelles and South Sudan.

Findings

The NDCs in Namibia, Seychelles and South Sudan highlight the necessity of including young people and highlighted key actions on training, educating and strengthening the capacity of youth and young women in climate action interventions. Kenya and the Comoros do not have inclusive consultation processes and this may impede the inclusive transformational changes the governments seek. The NDCs do not explicitly include youth-centred, inclusive, climate-resilient health systems, yet the generations that will be impacted by current government policies are largely the youth. Generally, the NDCs reviewed subtly included SRHR except for Kenya. Seychelles commits to conduct more research on the links between climate change, youth and SRHR, while the Comoros and South Sudan addressed vulnerabilities of women to some harmful practices such as sexual exploitation and GBV.



Imali Ngusale

Member, UNFPA
Joint Youth Working Group on
SRHR and Climate Change
Kenya



Photo: © Imali Ngusale



In Kenya, climate change has deepened existing inequalities to the extent that severely affected counties (Garissa, Isiolo, Kitui, Makueni and Wajir) have established County Climate Change Funds. This notwithstanding, the government has set aside the Climate Change Fund to reduce climate risks and contribute to the achievement of national adaptation priorities. The funds seek to empower local communities by strengthening public participation and building resilience to climate change. Although the funds have not been able to prevent climate shocks in the regions, the allocation has strengthened the obligation of adapting to the adverse climate change impacts. Unfortunately, climate change interventions have de-prioritized SRHR services. The lack of equal access to reproductive health commodities like contraceptives and youth-friendly services continues to threaten the health and well-being of young women and girls. Unfortunately, budget shifts have contributed to an increase in teenage pregnancy rates and other unintended pregnancies. Markedly, there has been a 40 per cent rise in the number of teen pregnancies in Kenya, with 152,000 pregnancies reported in 2020. Given that county-level climate change funds are considered crucial, financing SRHR services risks being ignored.

NDC discussions are often confined to government boardrooms, yet the proposals that stem from them affect youth and women, particularly those with disabilities or who are marginalized in other ways. This exclusion of women with disabilities from decision-making

spaces makes the vulnerable more vulnerable and the impoverished more susceptible to climate shocks and unpredictable patterns like flooding. It is therefore crucial for countries to assess the current structural causes of discrimination and ensure that they are addressed, since climate challenges inadvertently perpetuate harmful stereotypes. If SRHR is excluded as a priority area in tackling the climate crisis, governments may not recognize SRHR challenges adequately. Generally, in sub-Saharan Africa, the climate crisis could exacerbate the impacts of the deficits in existing health systems. Potential climate shocks may impede the advocacy gains in SRHR.

Taking action

1. Given that young people continue to be more susceptible to climate shocks and the climate crisis in general, governments in the region should prioritize broad consultation, facilitation, accountability and practical climate action that ensures meaningful inclusion of youth, as observed by ESA youth reviewer Imali Ngusale. Nominating youth ambassadors and lauding a few youth groups does not suffice as a legitimate strategy for inclusion. Governments should invest in developing comprehensive youth consultation and engagement strategies to maximize the diversity of youth expertise, as well as ensuring that national strategies are robustly inclusive of marginalized groups.
2. Additionally, youth-generated content on climate adaptation and resilience should also be considered in the consolidation of NDCs.
3. The government needs to empower, mobilize and partner with youth to institute a youth-inclusive, climate-resilient health system. Moreover, the government needs to include a rights-focused, gender-sensitive and people-centred health management and information system that tracks regional deficits in SRHR to inform a holistic budget that tackles climate adaptation while including SRHR.

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

A human rights-based approach is fundamental in achieving robust climate action, especially for the adaptation and resilience of the most vulnerable groups in front-line communities of climate impact. In October 2021, the United Nations Human Rights Council adopted a resolution that recognized the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment as a human right, ensuring that climate action and the rights, of people are inseparable (OHCHR, 2022).

Five countries recognize specific vulnerable groups outside of gender as facing disproportionate impacts of climate change in the main strategic mitigation and adaptation pillars of their NDCs (see figure 7). For example, Angola details the threat that rising sea levels poses to the coastal population and provides an intervention action to map human settlements that are at risk of erosion and flooding (Angola NDC, 2021: pp. 53, 56). Mauritius highlights an example of a solution it is implementing to protect vulnerable groups living in environmentally-fragile settings (which comprise 20 per cent of the population) through the construction of a refuge centre at Quatre Soeurs and a sea wall against storm surges at Rivière des Galets, and by desilting and cleaning rivers in adjoining residential areas prone to flooding to reduce flood impacts (Mauritius NDC, 2021: p. 10).

FIGURE 7:

Number of Nationally Determined Contributions that integrate human rights, participation and consideration of vulnerable groups out of the 19 Nationally Determined Contributions reviewed





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Only two NDCs mention health in the context of vulnerable groups. South Sudan commits to developing the capacities of its local communities regarding health risks and response measures against possible disease outbreaks (South Sudan NDC, 2021: p. 128). South Africa mentions a vulnerability assessment of the health sector that classified various subgroups, including older persons and children, as the most vulnerable to temperature extremes (South Africa NDC, 2021: p. 6).

One of the biggest criticisms the first NDCs faced was the limited multi-stakeholder participation and consultation that informed their development. Participation of all stakeholders is crucial in ensuring that the NDCs are truly nationally determined. All 19 countries referred to the participation of their population in developing the NDCs. For example, Mauritius details its multi-stakeholder engagement (Mauritius NDC, 2021: p. 3) and participatory process involving businesses, civil society, youth, students, women, senior citizens and the research community (Mauritius NDC, 2021: p. 11). Uganda

describes its whole-of-society approach and consultations through regional workshops (Uganda NDC, 2022: pp. 12, 54–55).

Participation of the population in sustainable local resource management (forests, energy and agriculture) is crucial for sustainable use of resources, but this was only reflected in five NDCs (the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eswatini, Malawi, South Sudan and the United Republic of Tanzania). The Democratic Republic of the Congo explains its participatory approach to the preservation of forests in simple land-use plans (the Democratic Republic of the Congo NDC, 2021: p. 48). The NDC of Malawi references participatory sustainable forest and landscape management, while South Sudan describes its community involvement approach to achieving the same goal of forest management (South Sudan NDC, 2021: p. 88) as well as capacity-building (South Sudan NDC, 2021: p. 87).

Only six NDCs (the Comoros, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Namibia, Seychelles and South Sudan) reference human rights. Kenya (2021: p. 10) and the Comoros (2021: p. 10) talk about their laws against discrimination on the basis of gender, with the Comoros going further to list the various rights and the enforcement of human rights of women and girls, as well as international conventions that address these. South Sudan mentions the rights of women in the context of the responsibilities of the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare (South Sudan NDC, 2021: p. 136). Namibia captures women's rights as part of adaptation interventions in the tourism sector (Namibia NDC, 2021: p. 58). The Democratic Republic of the Congo outlines the sensitization of logging communities to violence and the human rights of men and women as part of its adaptation action (the Democratic Republic of the Congo NDC, 2021: p. 68).



DISCUSSION

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

This review found that SRHR and GBV are integrated in eight NDCs, and include references to maternal and newborn health, GBV, HIV and AIDS, SOGIESC, SRHR information and awareness and adolescent and youth SRHR. This review builds on a previous review of 50 NDCs submitted before 2020 that covered all ESA countries (UNFPA and Queen Mary University of London, 2021). Comparison between the two reviews shows an increase from two to eight NDCs referencing SRHR and GBV issues. In this review, the way SRHR issues are addressed in the NDCs vary, with most NDCs acknowledging the impacts of climate change on SRHR and GBV while the Comoros, Seychelles, Malawi and Uganda include SRHR in adaptation measures and provide strong examples of how SRHR and GBV can be integrated in NDCs. Examples of this include SRHR in vulnerability risk assessments, disaster preparedness plans and health information management systems. For example, Seychelles commits to ensuring that climate-related vulnerability assessments and actions take into account SRHR and GBV risks, and that protective measures are informed by disaggregated population data (Seychelles NDC, 2021: p. 36).

ESA NDCs could be strengthened by gathering and including national-level evidence on the impacts of climate change and SRHR and GBV for more evidence-based policymaking. Where better data or research exists on the impacts of climate change and SRHR and GBV, this supports the development of tailored interventions. This evidence could come in the form of better data collection, research on the impacts of climate change and vulnerability assessments that incorporate SRHR and GBV issues. Furthermore, none of the NDCs provide cost estimates, indicators or mechanisms of implementation for SRHR and GBV measures, which are essential for policymaking and should be integrated in the next round of NDCs.

The risk of GBV is known to increase during situations of stress and scarcity, often related to economic instability, food insecurity and exacerbated gender inequality (van Daalen, 2022). The impacts of climate change and weather-related disasters can also indirectly exacerbate GBV through climate-induced migration (USAID, 2020). The NDC of the Comoros provides a good example of how GBV risks can be anticipated and mitigated in disaster plans with its National Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan. This plan incorporates mechanisms for monitoring, raising awareness and preventing of different forms of abuse, violence and sexual exploitation among displaced populations, in particular women and children, and includes SRHR interventions (the Comoros NDC, 2021: p. 11).



Health

All 19 NDCs integrate aspects of health. Eighteen NDCs reference health surveillance and early warning systems respectively, which can be expanded to include SRHR. This is demonstrated by Seychelles' measure to improve health management information systems to incorporate indicators of climate stress linked to major health impacts, including those related to reproductive, maternal, neonatal, child and adolescent health (Seychelles NDC, 2021: p. 35). Early warning systems should be co-designed and accessible to vulnerable groups and communities and include relevant SRHR information and services.

Assessing the cost of climate change adaptation is essential to policymaking. While the Southern Africa region bears the largest financing gap for its NDCs in absolute

terms on the continent, countries in East Africa face the largest climate investment gaps as a percentage of their GDPs (Climate Policy Initiative, 2022). Our analysis reveals five NDCs included a cost estimate for the measures they describe. Examples of good practice include the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which demonstrates the importance of including costed adaptation measures. These include health sector adaptations that intersect with gender and vulnerable group thematic areas; increase access of vulnerable populations to basic health services (US\$ 880,000); integrate a gender approach in climate change health issues (US\$ 230,000); construct more health facilities (US\$ 920,000); integrate climate change impacts in health policies (US\$ 60,000); and assess health vulnerability to climate-sensitive diseases (US\$ 60,000) (the Democratic Republic of the Congo NDC, 2021: p. 37).



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Gender

All 19 NDCs integrate gender to some degree, with all of these including an aspect of gender mainstreaming and/or responsiveness. The depth and detail of gender references was highly variable, with some NDCs including the term while others include measurement and accountability mechanisms to track gender-sensitive progress. South Sudan demonstrates the importance of including a gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation metric with its target for 35 per cent representation of women in decision-making spaces related to climate change (South Sudan NDC, 2021: p. 149). Thirteen NDCs recognize women as disproportionately affected by the impacts of climate change, commonly in relation to socioeconomic and legal status, education level and role in childcare, agricultural and domestic activities. Tackling gender equality and justice is crucial for climate adaptation, and efforts to do so through social and economic empowerment and capacity-building, which are described in 16 NDCs, will provide opportunities to achieve SRHR and eliminate GBV.

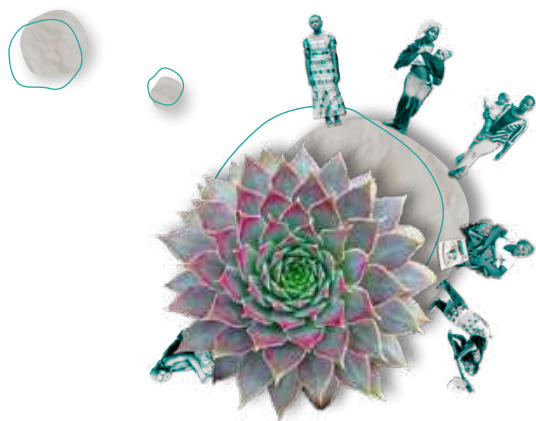
One of the gender and climate decisions of the United Nations Climate Change Conference in December 2019 (COP25) was the creation of the National Gender and Climate Change Focal Point (NGCCFP) (UNFCCC, 2019). South Sudan is the only ESA NDC to mention the NGCCFP in the review, possibly due to limited capacity and investment in this area.



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Population dynamics and human displacement

Fifteen NDCs include a description of the national population or aspects of its dynamics, such as size and structure, and 14 NDCs reference urbanization or human displacement. Malawi highlights how interventions can be included with budget lines and designated actors. Its NDC includes an intervention with an estimated cost of US\$ 35 million for long-term workforce development to help people move into employment opportunities. It also plans for managed urban migration with the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare, non-governmental organizations and civil society organizations, such as gender networks as the responsible actors (Malawi NDC, 2021: p. 81). Migration is a highly gendered issue, as women do not have equal access to assets and adaptation options to migrate as men (McOmber, 2020). Additionally, migrants often have their SRHR curtailed if not totally disregarded by governments due to their status (Rocha-Jimenez and others, 2018; Calderón-Jaramillo and others, 2020). This increases women's vulnerabilities, including risk of GBV. Including women's consultation and participation in migration planning and response activities is therefore crucial to protecting women and ensuring gender equality.

Youth

Nearly all (17 out of 19) NDCs integrate youth to some degree, with 10 NDCs describing youth in relation to education and awareness and 10 recognizing youth as particularly vulnerable to climate change. A relatively low proportion of NDCs (5 out of 17) describe youth in relation to health. Young people are known to be disproportionately vulnerable to the physical and psychological impacts of climate change (Helldén and others, 2021; Hickman and others, 2021). Namibia provides a good example of how youth participation and health can intersect with intervention measures to raise awareness and engagement of youth in various health-related issues that may arise as a result of climate change, including psychological vulnerabilities such as mental illness, depression and the need to prepare and build resilience in the face of extreme events, and engage youth on strategies to address anticipated, current and future threats to public health (Namibia NDC, 2021: pp. 59–60).

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

There are 12 NDCs that consider a section of the population as vulnerable, most commonly women, young people, older persons and persons with disabilities. Eswatini is the only country to recognize the LGBTQIA+ community as disproportionately vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, and none of the NDCs describe measures to address this vulnerability. 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).



Collection of gender-sensitive data is essential to increase understanding of these threats and inform policy and practice, which should explicitly consider and include gender-diverse populations.

Many countries include measures to reduce vulnerability among segments of the population. For example, Angola describes an initiative, the KWENDA programme, that recognizes the impacts of climate change on vulnerable groups and provides a fixed monthly income of 8,500 kwanzas to vulnerable families, alongside including them in income-generating activities (Angola NDC, 2021: p. 22).

All 19 NDCs contain some reference to public participation and climate policy and/or action, with most NDCs describing their development process as participatory. Stronger references to public participation describe specific ongoing initiatives to increase public participation in climate policy. Mauritius, for example, describes an intervention aimed at strengthening the involvement of the public, and in particular vulnerable groups, in the NDC development process by

preparing an awareness-raising strategy and communication plan to sensitize stakeholders to the NDC via women's associations, youth leaders, senior citizens, fishers, planters, academia, professionals, students, civil society and non-governmental organizations. Moreover, the final version of the NDC was communicated through videos, a dedicated website and translated into the local Creole language (Mauritius NDC, 2021: p. 11).

The UNFCCC recognized the adverse impacts of climate change on the effective enjoyment of human rights and calls upon States to ensure respect for human rights in their climate actions in COP16 decision 1/CP.16, (UNFCCC, 2011). The preamble to the Paris Agreement calls upon States to "respect, promote and consider their respective obligations on human rights" (UNFCCC, 2016). Six NDCs reference human rights, with the Democratic Republic of the Congo providing an example of how this can be included in adaptation measures by sensitizing the various actors involved in the use of forest resources on violence and human rights (the Democratic Republic of the Congo NDC, 2021: p. 68).



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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 for and forecast 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.

Financing and accountability

- 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

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- 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 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' groups, 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, youth, people with diverse SOGIESC, Indigenous peoples' groups, older persons, persons with disabilities and others as relevant.

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. Incorporate SRHR in empowerment and capacity-building programmes for women.** Empowerment and capacity-building of women and girls is an important theme throughout the ESA region, described by nearly all NDCs. Use strategies to empower women through economic and social means as a pathway for women and girls to gain autonomy over their SRHR and enjoy a life free of GBV.
- 15. Further strengthen the meaningful inclusion of young people, including increasing participation, creating opportunities for employment and livelihoods and including SRHR in youth and health linkages within NDCs in the ESA region.** The impacts of climate change on young people are referenced across some



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ESA NDCs but there is scope for more. Some ESA NDCs make links between young people, climate and health but not with direct reference to SRHR or GBV. Ensuring high-quality, accessible and acceptable SRHR and GBV services is essential for youth resilience. Young people represent a substantial portion of the ESA population and climate-related economic and workforce transitions should be gender- and youth-responsive.



CONCLUSION

Access to sexual and reproductive health services and information, including maternal health, family planning and protection services, empowers women and girls to protect their rights, make choices and realize their potential, strengthening climate change-affected communities' ability to adapt.

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This regional review of the integration of SRHR and right-based approaches in 19 NDCs in the ESA region found eight references to SRHR and GBV issues.

There are no references to harmful practices. While some countries only refer to aspects of SRHR and GBV in their country's situational analysis, 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 are 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 stakeholders to address the intersection of SRHR, GBV, 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 gender action plans (GAPs), national adaptation plans (NAPs), health sector plans, the commitments around the Summit of the Future 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 the 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.
- 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.

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.
- 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 East and Southern Africa for review

Country included	Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) reviewed	Submission date	Original language
Angola	Updated NDC	31 May 2021	English
Burundi	Updated NDC	5 October 2021	French
Comoros (the)	Updated NDC	5 November 2021	French
Democratic Republic of the Congo (the)	Updated NDC	28 December 2021	French
Eswatini	Updated NDC	12 October 2021	English
Ethiopia	Updated NDC	23 July 2021	English
Kenya	Updated NDC	28 December 2021	English
Malawi	Updated NDC	30 July 2021	English
Mauritius	Updated NDC	5 October 2021	English
Mozambique	Updated NDC	27 December 2021	English
Namibia	Updated NDC	30 July 2021	English
Rwanda	Updated NDC	20 May 2020	English
Seychelles	Updated NDC	30 July 2021	English
South Africa	Updated NDC	27 September 2021	English
South Sudan	Second NDC	21 September 2021	English
United Republic of Tanzania (the)	Updated NDC	30 July 2021	English
Uganda	Updated NDC	12 September 2022	English
Zambia	Updated NDC	30 June 2021	English
Zimbabwe	Updated NDC	24 September 2021	English

Country not included	Reason for exclusion
Botswana	Submitted first Nationally Determined Contribution pre-2020 (11 Nov. 2016) with no update since
Eritrea	Submitted first Nationally Determined Contribution pre-2020 (19 June 2018) with no update since
Lesotho	Submitted first Nationally Determined Contribution pre-2020 (22 June 2018) with no update since
Madagascar	Submitted first Nationally Determined Contribution pre-2020 (21 Sept. 2016) with no update since

Appendix 2: Summary tables

Table 1: Sexual and reproductive health and rights, gender-based violence and harmful practices references across East and Southern Africa 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 identities and expressions, and sex characteristics	Sexual and reproductive health and rights information and awareness	Other
East and Southern Africa (19)	3	3	0	0	2	1	0	3	1	1	1

Table 2: Human rights, participation and vulnerable groups references across East and Southern Africa 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 Contribution development	Local resource management	In relation to gender	
East and Southern Africa (19)	5	4	3	11	19	5	14	7

Table 3: Population dynamics, human mobility and urbanization references across East and Southern Africa Nationally Determined Contributions

Region (number of Nationally Determined Contribution)	Any reference to population dynamics	Migration, urbanization, human mobility
East and Southern Africa (19)	19	14

Table 4: Youth references across East and Southern Africa 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
East and Southern Africa (19)	10	12	5	10	2

Table 5: Gender references across East and Southern Africa Nationally Determined Contributions

Region (number of Nationally Determined Contributions)	Mainstreaming	Vulnerability	Rights	Participation	Empowerment	Health	Energy	Agriculture	Water/food security
East and Southern Africa (19)	18	13	7	10	16	9	4	9	1

Table 6: Health references across East and Southern Africa 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
East and Southern Africa (19)	8	17	7	18	19	9	5	10	7	11	14	18	5

Appendix 3: Overlapping themes by country

Country	Sexual and reproductive health and rights, gender-based violence and harmful practices	Gender	Health	Population dynamics	Vulnerable groups	Participation	Human rights	Youth
Angola	●	●	●	●	●	●		●
Burundi		●	●	●		●		●
Comoros (the)	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Democratic Republic of the Congo (the)		●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Eswatini	●	●	●	●	●	●		●
Ethiopia		●	●	●	●	●		●
Kenya		●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Malawi		●	●	●	●	●		●
Mauritius	●	●	●	●	●	●		●
Mozambique		●	●	●		●		
Namibia	●	●	●	●		●	●	●
Rwanda		●	●	●		●		
Seychelles	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
South Africa		●	●	●	●	●	●	●
South Sudan	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
United Republic of Tanzania (the)		●	●	●		●		●
Uganda	●	●	●	●		●	●	●
Zambia		●	●	●		●		●
Zimbabwe		●	●	●	●	●		●



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