



EDUCATION FOR CLIMATE ACTION: INTEGRATING EDUCATION INTO NATIONALLY DETERMINED CONTRIBUTIONS

Guidance Document

February 2025

Executive Summary

The first Global Stocktake in 2023 found that the Paris Agreement has driven near-universal progress on climate action, but that the world is not on track to meet its climate goals.

A Nationally Determined Contribution is a country's self-defined national pledge to reduce the rate of climate change (*climate change mitigation*) and adapt to its impacts (*climate change adaptation*). This can also include addressing *loss and damage* associated with the adverse impacts of climate change that are no longer avoidable

2025 is when the third round of updated NDCs will be submitted. This means 2025 is a vital year for countries to scale up their ambition. Parties will submit their third revision of the NDC (NDC 3.0) before COP30. These new NDCs take us to 2035 targets.

Despite being recognized in articles of agreements formulated in climate negotiations since 1992, education has been a neglected sector in the conceptualization of climate strategies. Ministries of Education have often faced challenges in ensuring that linkages with education are made in national climate policies, and efforts over the past decade to enshrine education in national climate commitments have been limited.

Including education in NDCs is important to:

- Meet international climate finance requirements for national prioritization, thereby improving opportunities to secure climate finance towards education
- Secure additional support, resources, capacity and finance from other sources for education
- Guide national implementation of climate-smart education
- Raise the profile and importance of education in climate action

It is every child's right to learn in a safe and resilient environment and gain the knowledge and skills they need to adapt to climate-induced shocks and stresses, take climate and pro-environmental action, acquire jobs in the green economy and become leaders for climate justice. If these areas are included in NDCs, they are more likely to receive support from other ministries, sectors and international organizations, and align climate finance and action around key priorities.

While this guidance specifically pertains to education, it is crucial to contextualize this work within the broader landscape for children. There is a dramatic underinvestment in children and the essential services they need more broadly to adapt to a rapidly changing climate and realize their rights. Most agreements at the global, regional, and national levels (including NDCs and NAPs) are blind to the unique vulnerabilities children face. According to indicators assessing child-sensitivity in NDCs, less than half meet this threshold, and up to 2023 only 2.4% of finance from key multilateral climate funds was found to support projects incorporating child-responsive activities (however certain funds, including the Green Climate Fund, are actively working with partners to address this gap). Along with education, governments must focus on building the resilience of child critical services, including health, nutrition, child protection, social protection, and WASH.

This document sets out to support Ministries of Education and education sector partners to effectively engage in NDC processes by providing:

- 1) Common guidance and education messaging to highlight **what** could be included in NDCs and **why**
- 2) Entry points to identify **where** to include education in NDCs
- 3) Step by step process to demonstrate **how** to include education in NDCs, both those already being updated and nearing completion, and those starting from the beginning.

This guidance document will cover:

- Section A: introduction to the document.
- Section B: outlines the opportunity for including education in the NDCs, what NDCs are, why they're important, the key stakeholders involved in the drafting and where you can get further information.
- Section C: provides a rationale for why education should be included in NDCs.
- Section D: details the step by step process for including education in NDCs, including example activities, indicators and accompanying guidance.
- Section E: provides a rapid checklist to support Ministries of Education in analyzing the process above and steps taken towards it.
- Section F: expands on some of the NDC specific considerations.
- Annexes: the annexes provide further information on key concepts, the international climate policy landscape, and further example indicators.

The guidance document is designed to be practical and to provide specific, actionable suggestions to support education's inclusion in NDCs. It offers several tools to enable this, some of which are summarized here.

Rapid checklist to assess inclusion of education in NDC

This table is a rapid checklist to support Ministries of Education and the education sector in assessing the inclusion of education in the NDC. This can be used at any point in the process to determine how comprehensive the approach is and to signpost additional ways to strengthen the document.

Level	Action	Checklist
Baseline	The NDC includes a clear entry point for the education sector to support delivery of the NDC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Minimum	The background/national circumstances section recognizes the impact of climate change on education	<input type="checkbox"/>
	The adaptation section recognizes child-focused education as a sector that can address the adaptation gap	<input type="checkbox"/>
	The mitigation section recognizes the role of education, training, and skills development in the achievement of the country's mitigation goals	<input type="checkbox"/>
	The Ministry of Education recognized as a stakeholder involved in the delivery of the NDC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Good, all of the above and at least two of:	The NDC includes an activity addressing the adaptation gaps of the education sector (system strengthening, school safety, resilient infrastructure etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>
	The NDC includes an activity recognizing the role of education in contributing to adaptation, mitigation, wider climate action and the just/green transition (knowledge, skills, behaviors etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>
	The NDC includes education in other relevant areas/sectors' activities e.g. disaster risk management, mitigation, infrastructure etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Best, all of the above, plus:	Education is included as a standalone, prioritized sector with clear time-bound targets	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Education is included in the resource/funding requirement section either as unconditional or conditional area	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Education is included in the monitoring framework with dedicated indicators on education	<input type="checkbox"/>
	The Ministry of Education has an explicit role in the delivery and monitoring of the NDC	<input type="checkbox"/>

Possible sector entry points for including education

The table above highlights sectors which are likely to be included in NDCs. For each of these sectors, the guidance document provides suggestions for how education can be included.

The table below provides a worked example of how the guidance document helps identify entry points, rationale, example messaging and activities, targets and indicators and further resources. See page 25 for the full table.

Entry points
Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE)
Adaptation
Capacity building
Child rights/ human rights/ vulnerable populations
Disaster and climate risk management
Industry and Infrastructure (adaptation)
Just transition
Mitigation and energy
Policies and strategies
Public awareness raising
Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

Worked example from the detailed tool with activities and indicators

Entry point	Rationale	Example messaging/ activities	Targets/ indicators	Existing guidance for reference
Disaster and climate risk management	If there are any sections or paragraphs on disaster risk management, this should be another entry point for education since the sector has strong evidence and experience of disaster risk management. To ensure education continuity for children, the education sector needs to conduct disaster risk management, preparedness and anticipatory actions.	<p>Every school should develop participatory risk assessments that contribute to risk reduction and preparedness.</p> <p>Ensure schools have access to timely and understandable early warning systems.</p> <p>Adapt school calendars to consider climate changes.</p> <p>Incorporate climate risk management activities in School Improvement Plans (SIPs).</p> <p>Develop school, sub-national and national level Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for different climate hazards.</p> <p>Teachers trained in comprehensive school safety practices.</p>	<p>Participatory, child-centred risk assessment and reduction plan is in place at all levels in the education sector.</p> <p>Schools have access to hazard and risk data and information at sub-national and local levels.</p> <p># of school days lost due to hazards is reduced.</p> <p>% of schools with access to early warning systems by 2035.</p> <p># of school-level Standard Operating Procedures for different hazards developed</p> <p># of schools incorporating climate risk management in their School Improvement Plans</p> <p># of climate-relevant indicators included in the country's EMIS system</p> <p># of alternative learning modalities and platforms operational during climate-related disruptions, etc.,</p> <p>% more teachers and resource persons trained on disaster risk reduction and management and comprehensive school safety</p>	<p>Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015) - UNDRR</p> <p>Words into Action: Engaging Children and Youth in Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience Building (2020) - UNDRR</p> <p>Pillar 2 of Comprehensive School Safety Framework – Targets and Indicators (2022) - GADRRRES</p>

Other sectors, such as agriculture, transport and health also provide entry points for education. See [Annex 5](#) for suggested ways to build these links.

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A. Introduction

This guidance note, written by Save the Children through the support of the Global Partnership for Education's *Climate-Smart Education Systems Initiative*, aims to reinforce the capacity of Ministries of Education and the wider education sector to engage in climate policy processes, specifically the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), and thereby advance the inclusion of education in these policies.

Despite being recognized in articles of agreements formulated in climate negotiations since 1992, education has been a neglected sector in the conceptualization of climate strategies. Ministries of Education have often faced challenges in ensuring that linkages with education are made in national climate policies, and efforts over the past decade to enshrine education in national climate commitments have been limited.

Some of these identified challenges in incorporating education in NDCs include:

- Limited engagement from the education sector in many countries' NDC processes, requiring further awareness raising, combined with sometimes limited climate change knowledge within departments of education.
- Competing priorities for the Ministry of Environment to consider when updating the NDC whereby education can be overlooked or deprioritized. A clear rationale for why education is a key sector for climate action is needed.
- Limited localized data and evidence on how the education sector, including students, teachers and education support personnel, are affected by climate change. This includes limited understanding of the education adaptation finance gap to address future climate risks.
- Limited coordination between Ministries of Education and Environment, with the Ministry of Education often not invited to participate in national climate policies processes. Even when the Ministry of Education is invited, there can be internal coordination issues across sectors given an often large number of working groups, and limited data/information challenges.

This guidance document aims to provide direction to help overcome these challenges.

Including education in NDCs is important to:

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It is every child's right to learn in a safe and resilient environment and gain the knowledge and skills they need to adapt to climate-induced shocks and stresses, take climate and pro-environmental action, acquire jobs in the green economy and become leaders for climate justice. If these areas are included in NDCs, they are more likely to receive support from other ministries, sectors and international organizations, and align climate finance and action around key priorities.

Quality education is vital for achieving many if not all objectives of an NDC. Without knowledge and skills on mitigation, adaptation and loss and damage, including the necessary action required, the long-term targets of an NDC, and therefore the Paris Agreement, will be difficult to achieve. Education spurs action, drives behavioral change, and provides the knowledge and skills required to adapt to and address climate change.

Including education in NDC updates and implementation can ensure climate action reaches even more people: students, parents, other family members, teachers, other school staff etc., amplifying and accelerating progress.

While this guidance specifically pertains to education, it is crucial to contextualize this work within the broader landscape for children. There is a dramatic underinvestment in children and the essential services they need more broadly to adapt to a rapidly changing climate and realize their rights. Most agreements at the global, regional, and national levels (including NDCs and NAPs) are blind to the unique vulnerabilities children face. According to indicators assessing child-sensitivity in NDCs, less than half meet this threshold, and up to 2023 only 2.4% of finance from key multilateral climate funds was found to support projects incorporating child-responsive activities (however certain funds, including the Green Climate Fund, are actively working with partners to address this gap). Along with education, governments must focus on building the resilience of child critical services, including health, nutrition, child protection, social protection, and WASH.

Objectives of the guidance

This document sets out to support Ministries of Education and education sector partners to effectively engage in NDC processes by providing:

- 4) Common guidance and education messaging to highlight **what** could be included in NDCs and **why**
- 5) Entry points to identify **where** to include education in NDCs
- 6) Step by step process to demonstrate **how** to include education in NDCs, both those already being updated and nearing completion, and those starting from the beginning.

The intended audience of this guidance note is Ministries of Education and their partners – non-governmental organizations, development partners, civil society, and others – who can support and facilitate the engagement of Ministries of Education in NDC processes.

Overview of guidance document

This guidance document will cover:

- Section A: introduction to the document.
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B. Nationally Determined Contributions and the Opportunity for Education in NDC 3.0

What Are Nationally Determined Contributions?

The Paris Agreement was adopted in 2015 as a legally binding international treaty to keep global average temperatures well below 2°C and pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. Under Article 4 of the Paris Agreement, each country must “outline and communicate its climate actions and targets every 5 years, known as their “nationally determined contributions” or NDCs.

A Nationally Determined Contribution is a country’s self-defined national pledge to reduce the rate of climate change (*climate change mitigation*) and adapt to its impacts (*climate change adaptation*). This can also include addressing climate-related *loss and damage* associated with the adverse impacts of climate change that are no longer avoidable.

The NDC includes a set of priorities, actions, goals, indicators and resources that a country decides on and commits to achieving to help meet the globally agreed joint goal in the Paris Agreement to address climate change. NDCs represent short- to medium-term targets and typically include measures for both mitigation and adaptation.

NDCs are the key mechanism under the Paris Agreement to collectively achieve the goal of limiting temperature increases to 1.5°C and addressing climate change.¹ They translate international climate agreements into concrete targets and measures that countries will work toward over the subsequent 10 years.

When brought together, these nationally agreed climate actions will determine whether the world achieves the long-term goals of the Paris Agreement, to reach global peaking of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions as soon as possible and to undertake rapid reductions thereafter.

The terminology was adopted to emphasize the “bottom-up” (nationally determined) nature of the contributions that countries make to the global effort to address climate change, as opposed to a “top-down” (globally determined) approach.

For full details of what the Paris Agreement’s Article 4 on NDCs contains, please see [Annex 3](#).

¹ However, the current mitigation policies and pledges (including NDCs) suggest we’re on a trajectory of 2.7 degrees (Climate Action Tracker).

Key concepts

Ratchet mechanism

NDCs are designed to be updated over time. A key principle of the Paris Agreement (Article 4, paragraph 2) is that countries would “ratchet up” their plans every 5 years (2020, 2025, 2030 etc.) to reflect their “highest possible ambition” to collectively meet the goals of the Paris Agreement. NDCs would therefore reflect increased national ambition and evolving capabilities for climate action and be based on the latest science and technology advances, meaning each updated NDC must be more ambitious than the previous. Increasingly social sectors such as health and education are included in NDCs, supporting the ratchet mechanism’s aim to be more ambitious. Because a key assumption behind the ratchet mechanism concept is that a country would evolve their human capital capabilities alongside their technological capabilities, sectors like health and education hold an important role in ensuring a country’s NDC can actually ratchet up.

Countries also submit biennial transparency reports (BTR) every two years to identify progress on implementing their NDCs, and challenges. These can also communicate the level of financial, technical or technological support countries need or are providing.

Conditional Components

Many developing countries’ NDCs have been developed with ‘conditional components’ requiring international cooperation on finance, technology and capacity strengthening. This means many NDC targets or actions are dependent on receiving support related to finance, technology development and transfer, or capacity building.

Alignment of financial flows and the provision of finance is therefore critical to achieving many Parties’ NDCs that are framed in conditional terms.

Global Stocktake

The Global Stocktake takes place every five years (starting in 2023) to assess the collective progress towards achieving the Paris Agreement’s purpose and long-term goals (Article 14). The scope of the Global Stocktake covers mitigation, adaptation and means of implementation and support. The Paris Rulebook outlines the scope of the Global Stocktake to include social and economic consequences of climate change and associated loss and damage. Therefore, the Global Stocktake also provides an opportunity to include education as a key sector for analysis.

For more details on the NDC Cycle, please see [Annex 4](#).

Why are NDCs important?

- NDCs are required by every country who ratified the Paris Agreement and are currently the world’s best effort to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement.
- They represent politically supported plans for investing in crucial areas that have the potential not only to meet climate goals but also to advance sustainable development across sectors.
- They guide national policy implementation with many countries now enshrining their climate commitments in nationally binding laws and regulations.

- They can influence where climate finance is allocated based on donor/investor alignment with the NDCs e.g. UNFCCC climate funds such as the Green Climate Fund seek to support NDC priorities.
- NDCs are also a way for developing countries to secure additional international support through the inclusion of "conditional" climate pledges in NDCs, which they can only achieve with international support.

Who drafts NDCs?

The Ministry of Environment is typically responsible for drafting and updating a country's NDC. Many countries take a whole-of-government approach to their drafting, involving various ministries in the development of targets and actions. While some ministries are frequently consulted (e.g. Ministries of Energy or Transport), others are only just beginning to engage.

A good place to start to identify those likely responsible for the NDC is on the UNFCCC [national focal point page](#).

Further information on NDCs

- All NDCs are recorded in [the NDC registry](#) which is publicly available and maintained by the UNFCCC Secretariat.
- You can also find the countries who have submitted their NDC on the Climate Watch [NDC Tracker](#).
- The [NDC Partnership](#) is a key resource with a repository of materials to support NDC processes. It brings together more than 200 members, including more than 130 countries, and more than 100 institutions to create and deliver ambitious climate action that helps achieve the Paris Agreement. Governments identify their NDC implementation priorities and the type of support that is needed to translate them into actionable policies and programs. Based on these requests, the membership offers a tailored package of expertise, technical assistance and funding.
- The organization Earth Day also has a [useful tracker](#) of NDCs focusing on components related to the curricula - incorporating climate education into formal curricula, supporting teacher training, engaging local communities, and fostering youth leadership.

Adaptation in NDCs

While the Paris Agreement included a Global Goal on Adaptation in Article 7.1 committing to "enhancing [the world's] adaptive capacity, strengthening resilience and reducing vulnerability to climate change," the previous cycles of NDCs (between 2015-2020) were more mitigation focused. However, NDCs increasingly include adaptation - over 150 countries now include adaptation in their NDCs. With the adoption of the [UAE Framework for Global Climate Resilience](#) in 2023, adaptation is expected to have even more emphasis in the NDC 3.0 cycle. Adaptation is also taking a more prominent focus, especially in least developed countries, given their insignificant greenhouse gas emission contribution to the global footprint, yet suffering unprecedented climate events.

NDCs are also increasingly including sectors and systems most impacted by climate change including agriculture, fisheries, water and ecosystem degradation, etc. as well as

social protection, gender equality and inclusion of Indigenous Peoples. However, adaptation commitments in NDCs are still underfinanced with limited tracking mechanisms to monitor effectiveness.

At national level, including adaptation in an NDC helps countries identify and prioritize adaptation needs, coordinate sub-national government entities, fill knowledge gaps, define areas needing external support and seek to fill the adaptation finance gap. At international level, it raises the profile of adaptation, fosters recognition of national action, highlights specifically where support is needed and can help mobilize climate finance for developing countries.

The adaptation elements of an NDC are often further elaborated in the country's National Adaptation Plan (NAP).

The opportunity this year: NDC 3.0

The first Global Stocktake in 2023 found that the Paris Agreement has driven near-universal progress on climate action, but that the world is not on track to meet its climate goals.²

2025 is when the third round of updated NDCs will be submitted. This means 2025 is a vital year for countries to scale up their ambition. Parties will submit their third revision of the NDC (NDC 3.0) before COP30. The new NDCs take us to 2035 targets.

Many Parties will aim to submit these in the first half of 2025 and therefore some countries' revisions are already well underway. There is still plenty of opportunity for Ministries of Education and the education sector to engage, especially as countries need a budget to review their NDC and some of these budget negotiations are only just beginning.

EXAMPLE: [Cambodia](#)

Cambodia has included several activities related to education in their NDC (2020) covering teacher training, curricula and infrastructure:

- "Conduct training for education officials on climate change e.g. as a required component of teacher training.
- Upgrade curricula to include climate change for non-formal education.
- Implement climate change and disaster resilient construction and infrastructure standards including for public sector and community-focused buildings covering public health, education, WASH etc."

² UNFCCC (2023) [Global Stocktake](#)

C. Example rationale for why education should be included in the NDC

Rationale

- The education sector is increasingly exposed to risks driven by climate change, threatening children's right to quality, safe and inclusive education. Without preparedness, adaptation and resilience, climate shocks and stresses threaten to derail progress on education and undermine investments.
- It is every child's right to learn in a safe and resilient environment and gain the knowledge and skills they need to adapt to climate-induced shocks and stresses, take climate and pro-environmental action, acquire jobs in the green economy and become leaders for climate justice.
- Education is a sector that is both affected by climate change impacts and a key sector for addressing and responding to those impacts.
- The education sector is significantly affected by climate shocks and stresses causing injuries, loss of lives, destruction or damage to school buildings and loss of learning.
- Countries lost on average 11 days of instruction per year in affected schools due to climate-related school closures with low-income countries losing around 18 days per year (equivalent 10 percent of an academic year) in affected schools compared to high-income countries losing only 2.4 days.³
- Strengthening the resilience of the education sector to climate change impacts can have multiple benefits including reaching more of the population, protecting the rights and safety of one of the most vulnerable groups, ensuring continuous access to learning, promoting climate action, and equipping future workers with skills and knowledge to partake in a greener economy.
- Investments that support resilient schools and education systems can reduce climate risks for 275 million children.⁴
- Despite this, at most, only 1.5 percent of climate finance went to the education sector in 2021.⁵

Achieving this requires a multi-pronged approach covering:

- the resilience of the education system, including a strong foundation or enabling environment to ensure every school can deliver this, through policies and planning, data and evidence, multi-sectoral coordination and accessing new forms of finance
- safe school facilities to learn in and safe access routes
- continued access to education through disaster and climate risk and preparedness planning
- the content of what is taught in schools, pedagogical approaches and capacities of teachers to deliver this
- non-formal and extracurricular activities to promote climate action

³ World Bank (2024) [Choosing Our Future: Education for Climate Action](#)

⁴ UNICEF (2021) [The Climate Crisis is a Child Rights Crisis: Introducing the Children's Climate Risk Index](#)

⁵ World Bank (2024) [Choosing Our Future: Education for Climate Action](#)

Adaptation and preparedness

- People with higher levels of education exhibit greater disaster preparedness and response, experience reduced adverse effects and recover more quickly from disasters.⁶
- Education can improve the capacity to plan for the future and the allocation of resources. Those with higher levels of education are also more likely to have more diversified economic activities that are less dependent on the climate or environment and therefore more resilient to climate shocks.
- Education systems that invest in resilience are more likely to continue during and after climate-related disasters and ensure children have continued access to their education, vital in improving adaptive capacities. Further, schools that engage children in risk assessments, risk mitigation, disaster risk reduction, preparedness, anticipatory actions and continuity planning are not only likely to be more resilient but also support children's resilience and adaptive capacities at the household level and in the future. For example, households with higher education had greater disaster preparedness e.g. stockpiling emergency supplies and having a family evacuation plan.⁷
- Climate-resilient infrastructure can help reduce or ameliorate the impact of heat, pollution, and extreme weather on learning, protecting school communities from severe environmental stressors and threats.
- Education is itself a key adaptation solution. More education is correlated with strengthened adaptive capacity. Climate change education is vital to the development of climate literacy, which is itself vital for improved adaptation. Education also helps to build a breadth of green skills to support a just transition.⁸

Loss and damage

- Education faces loss and damage, such as lost school days, loss of life, damaged school infrastructure, loss of resources, damaged school access routes etc.
- Not only is education affected by climate-induced loss and damage, it also has a role to play in averting it. This could be through linking schools with early warning systems, taking a comprehensive climate and disaster risk management approach and risk financing mechanisms including anticipatory action.
- Education systems that are investing in preparedness and anticipatory action can have greater capacity to address losses and damages rather than reacting after to the impacts. Anticipatory actions in the education sector include using early warning systems to trigger an early response to emergencies, storing important documents safely, having plans in place for distance learning etc.

Mitigation

- Education can reshape behaviors and practice and develop knowledge and skills which are vital for taking climate action and living more sustainably. Evidence shows that well-designed climate change education can be as effective in reducing

⁶ World Bank (2024) [Choosing Our Future: Education for Climate Action](#)

⁷ ibid

⁸ Global Center on Adaptation (2022) [State and Trends in Adaptation report](#)

carbon emissions as other climate solutions such as rooftop solar or electric vehicles.⁹

- Studies have shown that behavioral change, which requires education and awareness raising, could mitigate 20–37 percent of global emissions from 2020–2050.¹⁰
- Educational interventions are most successful when they focus on local, tangible, and actionable aspects of sustainable development.¹¹
- Research highlights that an additional year of education is associated with a significant increase in pro-climate beliefs and practices.¹²
- As countries have made commitments to transition to low carbon economies and adapt to climate change, the current and future workforces also need to be equipped with the relevant skills and knowledge, including understanding what green jobs exist and how to attain them.
- Greening education infrastructure can help countries to achieve mitigation goals by reducing the emissions of buildings and facilities by deploying renewable energy technologies, adopting more weather resilient building designs and promoting restoration of carbon sinks around schools through reforestation and other greener ecosystem practices.

EXAMPLE: [Chad](#)

Chad has included several education-related activities in their NDC (2021) including climate risk management, revision of school calendar, action-oriented learning and adaptation:

- “Adults, youth and children improve their knowledge and information while encouraging them to participate in school activities focused on climate adaptation and resilience to contribute to climate change solutions.
- Promotion of environmental clubs in academic and academic institutions
- Integration of adaptation into the educational curricula and teaching modules
- Adapting school calendars to climate change
- Popularization of books and training guides”

⁹ Cordero EC, Centeno D, Todd AM (2020) [The role of climate change education on individual lifetime carbon emissions](#). PLoS ONE 15(2): e0206266.

¹⁰ Williamson, K., Satre-Meloy, A., Velasco, K., & Green, K., (2018). Climate Change Needs Behavior Change: Making the Case for Behavioral Solutions to Reduce Global Warming. Arlington, VA: Rare.

¹¹ Anderson (2012) Climate Change Education for Mitigation and Adaptation

¹² World Bank (2024) [Choosing Our Future: Education for Climate Action](#)

D. The process for including education in NDCs

The following section provides 7 STEPS with suggestions on **how** to include education in the NDC and **what** to include.

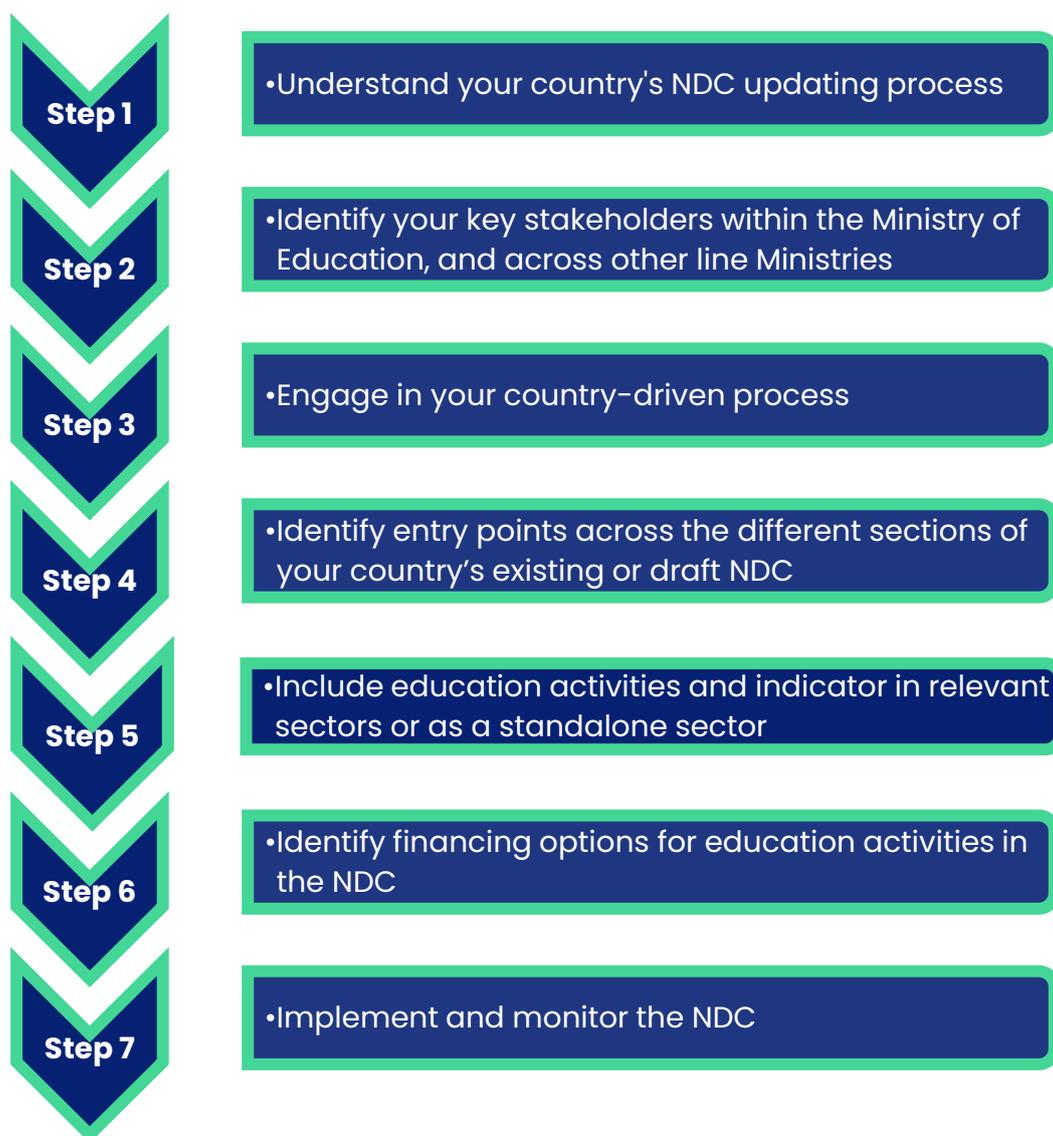
It is not prescriptive or exhaustive, and these steps may not all be necessary based on context. Please select the actions which are most relevant.

It also depends on **where** the country is in the updating process as to how to include education. The following table provides direction on which Steps to focus on depending where the country is in the updating process.

Table 1: Different options for action depending on NDC updating process

<p>Option 1 <i>Country at the <u>beginning</u> of updating the NDC</i></p>	<p>There are lots of opportunities! Go through all the STEPS below.</p>
<p>Option 2 <i>Country in the <u>process</u> of updating the NDC</i></p>	<p>There is still time! Focus on STEP 3 onwards.</p>
<p>Option 3 <i>Country <u>towards the end</u> of updating the NDC</i></p>	<p>There is limited time!</p> <p>Utilize STEP 4 to assess if there are still entry points to include education in relevant <i>existing</i> sectors or sections.</p> <p>Ideally, it is important to include <i>activities</i> and <i>indicators</i> in the NDC to ensure they are implemented when finalized.</p>
<p>Option 4 <i>Country's updated NDC <u>has already been approved and endorsed</u></i></p>	<p>If your country's NDC has already been approved <i>without</i> education included, there are still options to promote the role of education in delivering the NDC.</p> <p>It is possible to utilize STEPS 4 and 5 below to find entry points for the education sector. For example, if early warning systems have been identified as an action under the NDC, it is important for the Ministry of Education to work with the relevant department to ensure early warning information reaches schools.</p> <p>You can also begin to look at STEPS 1 and 2 to build and strengthen relationships with the relevant Ministries responsible for the NDC, to ensure they are effectively consulted in the next round of updates in 2030 (NDC 4.0).</p>

The following **7 STEPS** are suggested to help facilitate Ministries of Education and the wider education sector in engaging in the NDC process:



As this guidance is for both Ministries of Education and their partners, the following steps have differentiated suggestions which are color coded.

- **Bullet points in black are relevant for all education actors looking to engage in the NDC update process.**
- **Bullet points in green are primarily for Ministries of Education.**
- **Bullet points in purple are primarily for partners supporting the Ministry of Education in engaging in the process.**

STEP 1: Understand your country's NDC updating process

1. Does your country have an NDC and when was it last updated?

- Check your country's existing and most up to date NDC in the UNFCCC's [NDC Registry](#). Depending on how many revisions your country has done there may be one or two NDCs (NDC 1 or NDC 2).

2. Does the current document include education? Where in the document? Is it enough?

- Assess the current document to determine whether it includes education explicitly and start thinking through how and what could be improved on education.

3. What is the process for updating the NDC?

- Find out how the NDC is being updated including:
 - Timeline and deadlines for updating and submitting the NDC.
 - Stage in the process, organization of any upcoming sectoral or civil society workshops and next steps.

STEP 2: Identify your key stakeholders within the Ministry of Education, and across other line Ministries

1. Is the Ministry of Education already involved in the NDC update?

- Yes - identify who from the Ministry of Education is already involved in the NDC update.
- No - identify and appoint a focal point within the Ministry of Education who can support engagement in the process.

2. Do you know which line Ministry and specific Department is leading the update of the NDC in your country? Do you know if there is an ACE focal point and if they are engaged? Do you know if there are any other organizations supporting the process?

- Identify the appointed Ministry and Department leading the update of the NDC in your country - you can consult with your [national UNFCCC focal point](#) if you are unsure.
- Identify if there is an [NDC Partnership in-country facilitator](#) who can support with identifying key partners and processes.
- Identify if there is an Action for Climate Empowerment '[ACE](#)' [national focal point](#) and if and how they are engaged in the process.
- Identify if there are other organizations supporting the process. In some countries, for example UN agencies or other partners are often appointed to facilitate the process.
- Identify other partners, donors, youth groups, civil society organizations, research institutions or other actors who have engaged in the process to date to collaborate with or learn from, or who could engage with additional relevant expertise to support the process through consultations.
- Identify existing networks, projects or processes that already provide coordination between the Ministry of Education with the ministry appointed to lead the NDC (normally the Ministry of Environment) e.g. a national safe-schools network.

- Consider how the GPE Local Education Groups, Global Campaign for Education's national education coalitions and other civil society groups can be mobilized to support.
- 3. Does the Ministry of Education have the knowledge and skills on the NDC process to effectively engage in the process?**
- Identify stakeholders who can support the Ministry of Education in strengthening capacity to better understand the NDC process including how to engage.

STEP 3: Engage in your country-driven process

- 1. Do you know when the NDC meetings and workshops are taking place? Can the Ministry of Education also conduct their own workshops with relevant stakeholders to develop the activities, targets and indicators?**
- The Ministry of Education focal point should regularly connect and coordinate with the Ministry responsible for the NDC update and join relevant meetings and workshops.
 - Bring together education actors in country with those leading on the NDC to discuss how national education systems can be strengthened to help deliver inclusive climate action by:
 - Reducing vulnerability and building adaptive capacity and resilience for all.
 - Supporting national plans to address loss and damage.
 - Contributing to climate change mitigation goals, addressing adverse impacts of climate policies and supporting transitions to greener jobs and livelihoods.
 - Connect the education priorities identified for the NDC to national budgeting processes and fiscal allocations, including potential access to climate finance.
- 2. Do you have existing policies, strategies and programmes on climate change and education which can inform the NDC?**
- Identify and compile existing policies, strategies and programmes on climate change and education which can help inform the NDC.
 - Advocate for the review, analysis and inclusion of education sector plans and strategies in the NDC.
 - Identify key actions/activities in these policies, strategies and programmes which you'd like to see prioritized in the NDC.
 - Support the Ministry of Education with identifying key entry points and developing messages, activities and indicators that can be considered in the NDC (**see Table 2, below**).
 - Support the Ministry of Education in attending key NDC processes and workshops, especially sectoral workshops.
 - Join relevant stakeholder workshops.

STEP 4: Identify entry points across the different sections of your country's existing or draft NDC

- 1. Do you know the current sections of your country's existing or draft NDC?**

- Look through your country's NDC and familiarize yourself with the different sections of the NDC.

2. Which sections do you think are most relevant to include education?

- Analyze which *sections* are entry points for education. Highlight these in the document.
- Utilize **Table 2**, to draft messaging that can be included across the NDC's sections.
- N.B. all NDCs are different with differing sections. Table 2 is guidance to support the process and does not include all possible sections in an NDC. You will need to determine which sections are most relevant for your NDC and if there are other sections to integrate education.

Table 2: Guiding questions and guidance to include education in relevant NDC sections

Sections of an NDC	Guiding questions	Supportive guidance
National circumstances/ background	<p>Does the NDC include education in the background section?</p> <p>Is education highlighted as a sector both impacted by climate change and a solution to addressing its impacts?</p>	<p>See Section C, above.</p>
Responses to climate change (adaptation and mitigation) and relevant sectors (activities/actions)	<p>Is education included in the responses/actions to address climate change?</p> <p>Is it a standalone sector?</p> <p>Is it integrated into other priority sectors?</p>	<p>See <i>Table 3</i> below for example response activities you can draw on.</p>
Links to other frameworks or policies (e.g. long-term net zero strategy, national adaptation plan, DRR plans etc.)	<p>Does the NDC reference other international or national frameworks that are relevant to education?</p> <p>Does your country have a National Adaptation Plan or Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy? Does this reference education?</p>	<p>The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-2030) includes attention to the resilience of educational facilities, public awareness and education on risk reduction, risk reduction in formal and non-formal education, among others.</p> <p>The Sustainable Development Goals include SDG 4.7 on education for sustainable development including climate change education.</p>
Targets and indicators	<p>Does your NDC include any targets or indicators on education?</p> <p>Do you have any targets or indicators from other policies, strategies or programmes that can be included in the NDC, linked to the responses section?</p>	<p>See <i>Table 3</i> below, for suggested targets and indicators you can draw on.</p>
Means of implementation	<p>Does your NDC include any plans for implementation or sector-specific activities of which education activities could help to enhance or strengthen the efficacy?</p>	<p>Means of implementation can include any area that supports the implementation of the NDC</p>

	<p>How do you plan to implement any education activities under the NDC?</p> <p>Do you have access to finance, supportive legislation, ability to develop projects (including multilateral climate funds), the required capacity, identified technologies etc.?</p>	<p>including finance, project development, technical capacities, technologies, legislation etc.</p> <p>These are important to consider when developing education actions under the NDC.</p>
Funding requirements	<p>Have you costed your proposed education activities in the NDC?</p> <p>Will this funding be conditional or unconditional?</p>	<p>Conduct a financial analysis of existing and future funding opportunities. This can include different types of climate finance, domestic finance, bilateral finance, private sector etc.</p>
Monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV) framework	<p>Does your country have an existing monitoring, reporting and verification framework on adaptation, mitigation and/or finance? Does it include education?</p> <p>Is it linked to your country's SDG process? If yes, does this include SDG 4.7?</p>	<p>MRV refers to the process by which countries track and report on the implementation and impacts of mitigation and adaptation actions, and the finance used to support these actions.</p> <p>Countries may already have an MRV system for reporting on the implementation and impacts of adaptation actions for their National Communications.</p> <p>The Paris Agreement sets a requirement for periodic Adaptation Communications in conjunction with other key reports.</p> <p>Further information can be found in this CDKN Guide on MRV.</p>
Stakeholders involved	<p>Is the Ministry of Education listed as a key stakeholder for implementing the NDC?</p> <p>Are other key actors e.g. children, teachers, civil society etc. included as stakeholders?</p>	<p>It is important that the Ministry of Education is included as a stakeholder for delivering the NDC with responsibility for driving climate change and education actions.</p>

STEP 5: Include education activities and indicator in relevant sectors or as a standalone sector

Now that you've identified all the relevant sections of the NDC to include education, you can focus on the specific sectors.

1. Do you think there is opportunity for education to be considered as a standalone sector (and a cross-cutting sector)?

- Consider different factors based on:
 - your country's stage of the updating process,
 - the level of recognition across sectors of education as a key sector in addressing climate change
 - the level of current and previous engagement by the Ministry of Education in the process.
- Utilize Table 3 to propose activities, targets and indicators across different areas of education, going beyond climate education.

2. Do you think education is more likely to be considered if integrated across different sectors?

- Utilize all the information you've gathered so far to identify entry points across different relevant sectors for education in your country's existing or draft NDC. You can decide which makes most sense for your context.
- Integrate education in the NDC's identified priority sectors as a tool that can contribute to the priority sectors' outcomes.
- Utilize **Table 3** to identify entry points across different sectors and propose education activities, targets and indicators.
- If the NDC has listed other non-education sectors as a key mitigation or adaptation sector, there are many ways to identify possible entry points for education messaging and activities. **Table 6 in Annex 5** indicates the types of connections that Ministries of Education can make to other sectors' mitigation and/or adaptation goals, such as energy, agriculture, health and transportation. It is not an exhaustive list.
- All indicators should ideally be disaggregated by age and gender at a minimum.
- Example activities and indicators have been included from existing NDCs.

Table 3. Entry points, rationale, activities, targets, indicators and guidance for including education in different sectors of an NDC.

Entry point	Rationale	Example messaging/ activities	Targets/ indicators	Existing guidance for reference
<p>Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE)</p>	<p>Countries are encouraged to make commitments aligned with ACE, which is the only Article in the Paris Agreement to recognize education. While education here is often limited to what is taught in schools, ACE is a vital advocacy tool for Ministries of Education to ensure education is in the NDC in its broadest sense. This can then be expanded on to recognize all aspects of education.</p>	<p>Include climate change as a required training module of both pre-service and in-service teacher training.</p> <p>Upgrade the curricula to include climate change (adaptation, mitigation, action etc.) for formal and non-formal education across different subjects.</p> <p>Develop IEC materials on climate-related and school safety actions.</p> <p>Promote climate and environmental clubs in schools and communities.</p> <p>Involve children in the design, implementation and monitoring of school-based and/or community-based climate change actions and projects</p>	<p>Climate change included in the curricula in x subjects</p> <p>% of primary/secondary school students receiving an education on climate change through the curricula</p> <p>% more teachers and resource persons trained in climate change and school safety</p> <p># of information, education and communication (IEC) materials on climate-related actions developed</p> <p># of new and existing active climate and environmental clubs</p> <p>% of children and youth engaging in school-based or community-led climate action projects</p>	<p>ACE and NDCs ACE guidance (2020) – UNFCCC and UNESCO</p>

		through action-based learning.		
Adaptation	The education sector is one of the most climate-vulnerable social services and needs to be adapted to be more resilient to climate change. Schools and educational facilities offer an important public asset for community-based adaptation efforts and education itself is critical to the adaptation efforts of other sectors. Education should be considered as a sector under 'adaptation'.	<p>Mainstream climate change adaptation into Education Sector Plans and SDG4 Roadmap for Education 2030.</p> <p>Mainstream the education sector as a key social service sector in need of climate change adaptation.</p> <p>Children and parents participate in school activities focused on climate change adaptation and resilience to contribute to climate change solutions.</p> <p>Recognize the importance of formal and non-formal education programming in the achievement of adaptation goals requiring behavioral change and new and/or adapted skills.</p> <p>Develop advocacy and educational programmes</p>	<p>% of education plans, strategies and policies addressing climate change</p> <p>% of schools that have conducted a climate risk analysis</p> <p># of school parent-teacher associations hosting climate change adaptation and resilience events</p> <p>At least one model school in each province implementing climate change adaptation and resilience programmes by 2035.</p> <p># of community-led adaptation initiatives developed by school climate clubs, local universities, and/or local training institutions</p> <p># of schools, education organizations and training institutions that offer courses, degrees, and certificates in climate adaptation-relevant fields of study</p>	<p>Comprehensive School Safety Framework – Targets and Indicators (2022) – GADRRRES</p> <p>Toward climate-smart education systems: A 7-dimension framework for action Documents Global Partnership for Education (2023) – GPE</p>

		promoting the value of climate change and ecosystem-based adaptation.		
Capacity building	Often referenced in sector-specific sections, capacity building mentions offer an easy opportunity to emphasize the role of the education sector and to identify education actors as key delivery partners	Strengthen the capacity of schools, universities and education and training institutions to deliver adaptation and mitigation-relevant capacity building opportunities. Ensure opportunities to develop foundational skills and relevant skills progressions are embedded in and across the formal and non-formal education system.	# of children and youth participating in adaptation-relevant education, training, and capacity building programs % more local education and training institutions offering climate-relevant capacity building for children, youth, and adults % of children reaching minimum proficiency levels by age x or grade x	Capacity Building Portal - UNFCCC
Child rights/ human rights/ vulnerable populations	Education is one of the only sectors that is largely focused on children, who are often identified as vulnerable to climate change. As most countries have signed up to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and education is every child's	Ensure every child has equal access to quality education that is not disrupted by climate and disaster impacts. Enable children and youth, including girls and young women, to play active leadership roles in climate	Reduction in rates of absenteeism and school dropouts, increase in school completion, grade advancement etc. # of children, youth, and teachers invited to meaningfully engage in national climate change and education policy-level dialogues	Child- and youth-sensitive Nationally Determined Contributions (2024) - UNICEF

	right, this is an opportunity to integrate education messaging.	action, including promoting programmes and projects that create awareness, skills and capacities relevant for climate action.		
Disaster and climate risk management	If there are any sections or paragraphs on disaster risk management, this should be another entry point for education since the sector has strong evidence and experience of disaster risk management. To ensure education continuity for children, the education sector needs to conduct disaster risk management, preparedness and anticipatory actions.	<p>Every school should develop participatory risk assessments that contribute to risk reduction and preparedness.</p> <p>Ensure schools have access to timely and understandable early warning systems.</p> <p>Adapt school calendars to consider climate changes.</p> <p>Incorporate climate risk management activities in School Improvement Plans (SIPs).</p> <p>Develop school, sub-national and national level Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for different climate hazards.</p>	<p>Participatory, child-centered risk assessment and reduction plan is in place at all levels in the education sector.</p> <p>Schools have access to hazard and risk data and information at sub-national and local levels.</p> <p># of school days lost due to hazards is reduced.</p> <p>% of schools with access to early warning systems by 2035.</p> <p># of school-level Standard Operating Procedures for different hazards developed</p> <p># of schools incorporating climate risk management in their School Improvement Plans</p> <p># of climate-relevant indicators included in the country's EMIS system</p>	<p>Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015) - UNDRR</p> <p>Words into Action: Engaging Children and Youth in Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience Building (2020) - UNDRR</p> <p>Pillar 2 of Comprehensive School Safety Framework – Targets and Indicators</p>

		Teachers trained in comprehensive school safety practices.	# of alternative learning modalities and platforms operational during climate-related disruptions, etc., % more teachers and resource persons trained on disaster risk reduction and management and comprehensive school safety	(2022) - GADRRRES
Industry and Infrastructure (adaptation)	If the NDC includes references to climate-resilient (public) infrastructure, this should also include school facilities.	Implement climate change and disaster resilient, safe construction and infrastructure standards including for public sector buildings, such as schools. Retrofit and update existing schools to be climate change and disaster resilient.	% of new schools constructed utilizing climate-resilient practices Safe and resilient school construction, retrofit or replacement are funded % of schools that have adopted climate-adaptive practices such as water catchment and/or rainwater harvesting systems, school gardens, on-site composting facilities, etc.	Pillar 1 of Comprehensive School Safety Framework – Targets and Indicators (2022) – GADRRRES Principles of a Sustainable School Building, Retrofitting and Operating Mechanism – <i>forthcoming</i> Greening Education Partnership
Just transition	References in the NDC to a just transition can be an	Provide in-work training on green skills for young	# of in-work training schemes rolled out on green skills	Young People and Green Skills

	<p>entry point for education in terms of supporting current and future generations with the skills and knowledge to equally access and attain green jobs, including matching the curricula with green job market opportunities.</p>	<p>people, especially young women, already in employment, especially in high-emissions sectors.</p> <p>Increase young people's access to loans and grants for start-ups in the green economy.</p> <p>Provide young people, especially girls and young women, with career and training guidance on pathways into green jobs.</p> <p>Provide a TVET curriculum that is holistic and includes courses on climate and the environment and training in green skills.</p> <p>Anchor sustainable development, green economy principles and green skills development throughout education systems and across business development services.</p>	<p># of new loans or grants for green start-ups for young people</p> <p># of schools and community centers providing guidance on green career pathways</p> <p>Inclusion of green skills and climate change in the TVET curriculum</p>	<p>(2022) – Plan International</p>
Mitigation and energy	The education sector offers a valuable channel for	Utilize greener construction techniques when	% of schools which have green practices such as rainwater	Green school quality

	<p>scaling emissions reduction efforts by deploying green/renewable energy, greener construction, clean cooking for school meals, school gardens, etc. Education also has the vital role of promoting pro-environmental behaviors and practices critical for mitigation goals.</p>	<p>constructing, upgrading or retrofitting schools, including through locally-sourced materials.</p> <p>Promote the use of school-led and owned green practices such as rainwater harvesting, school gardens and micro-forests, engaging children in creating and implementing ideas, and in the upkeep.</p>	<p>harvesting, renewable energy sources, school gardens etc.</p> <p>% of schools using renewable energy sources</p> <p>% of schools who have electric vehicles as their means of transport</p> <p>% of schools using carbon efficient and locally-sourced construction materials</p> <p>% of schools with clean cooking stoves or clean cooking practices in their meal programme or kitchen</p> <p>% of schools that have conducted an energy audit and/or a greenhouse gas emissions inventory</p> <p>Scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions of schools and education and training facilities reduced or averted</p>	<p>standard (2024) - Greening Education Partnership</p>
Policies, strategies and data	<p>NDCs sometimes point to the need to strengthen existing national policy frameworks and strategies to better align with NDC</p>	<p>Mainstream climate change into Education Sector Plans and SDG4 Roadmap for Education 2030.</p>	<p>Climate change clearly addressed in the Education Sector Plan</p> <p>Climate change data included in the Education Management and</p>	<p>Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015) - UNDRR</p>

	<p>goals. These references to the national policy landscape offer a great opportunity to draw attention to national education policies, frameworks, and strategies and their role in strengthening cross-sectoral coordination around activities in support of the NDC.</p>	<p>Include climate change data in the Education Management and Information System (EMIS).</p> <p>Include education in climate data systems.</p>	<p>Information System (EMIS), including data on climate-related loss and damage.</p> <p>The education sector is included as a thematic area in climate data, including the vulnerability of schools to climate change, schools that are highly exposed or at-risk to climate impacts, and climate-induced loss and damage data related to the education sector.</p>	<p>Sustainable Development Goals – Goal 4</p> <p>Climate risk analysis in education sector (2025) – GPE and IIEP</p>
Public awareness raising	<p>Not always explicitly referenced as part of the ACE agenda, public awareness raising is often included in NDCs and should be elaborated to further reflect educating children, especially empowering them to take climate action and advance intergenerational and climate justice.</p>	<p>Engage children in school-level and household level climate risk analyses that can be used as public awareness raising tools</p> <p>Share school-level climate-related SOPs throughout the community</p> <p>Ensure public-awareness raising messages on climate change are child-friendly and gender responsive</p>	<p># of public awareness raising messages developed and shared</p> <p># of children and youth reached through climate change public-awareness raising campaigns</p>	<p>Public Awareness and Public Education for Disaster Risk Reduction (2018) – IFRC and Save the Children</p>

<p>Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)</p>	<p>References to enhancing the climate preparedness and resilience of WASH infrastructure and facilities in NDCs offer an opportunity to connect to the education sector, which has lots of experience attending to WASH issues in relation to child health, welfare, and school attendance.</p>	<p>Provide climate-resilient WASH facilities to support access to education for all children</p> <p>Enhance the adoption of climate-resilient WASH through the integration of WASH topics and solutions in the formal and non-formal education curriculum.</p> <p>Develop information, education, and communication (IEC) materials to build knowledge, awareness, skills, and behaviors necessary for widespread adoption of climate-resilient WASH infrastructure, practices, and behaviors.</p>	<p>% of schools with access to climate-resilient WASH facilities</p> <p>Climate-related WASH topics are integrated into relevant subjects such as health, biology, and life sciences</p> <p># of IEC materials developed and rolled out on climate-resilient WASH technologies and practices</p>	<p>WASH Climate Resilience: A compendium of case studies (no date) - UNICEF</p> <p>The Ripple Effect: Climate change and children's access to water and sanitation (2016) - UNICEF</p>
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For a list of other sectors that education could be integrated into/contribute to (such as agriculture, energy, health and transportation) please see [Annex 5](#).

STEP 6: Identify financing for education activities in the NDC

1. Do you know how much the activities you've proposed on education cost?

- Identify and calculate how much financing is required to meet the commitments made on education.

2. Where will this funding be sourced?

- Identify if this finance is available at the domestic level or whether international support is required to meet the education commitments in the NDC.
- If international support needs to be mobilized, ensure this is included in the 'conditional financing' section. This means that all or some of the education commitments will only be possible with additional finance, not secured at the domestic level.

STEP 7: Implement and monitor the NDC

If you have successfully included education in your country's updated NDC, it is important to feel responsible for delivering this. Across NDCs, it is usually the Ministry responsible for the sector activities which is responsible for implementation and monitoring. Therefore, it is likely that the Ministry of Education in your country will be responsible for implementing the education activities included in the NDC and reporting on these.

Even if education is not included in the NDC, there are opportunities to encourage implementation of education activities through contributing to other commitments.

For example, if there is a commitment on early warning systems, then the Ministry of Education could be part of the implementation via schools. Likewise, utilizing the monitoring indicators could be helpful to find entry points for education.

While the process above is specifically for the NDC revision, the same process could be translated to the National Adaptation Plan process. Individual countries determine their timeline for their NAPs and can be supported by the [NAP Global Network](#).

EXAMPLE: [Vanuatu](#)

Vanuatu has included several education-related activities in their NDC (2022) including advocacy, climate risk management, policies and plans, and resilience programmes:

- "Vanuatu commits to developing advocacy and educational programmes around the value of ecosystem-based adaptation, including at least one model school in each province implementing environmental resilience programmes by 2030.
- Vanuatu commits that 100% of schools incorporate climate risk management activities in their School Implementation Plans by 2030.
- Vanuatu commits to reduce gaps in relation to climate disaster responsiveness of school facilities.
- Mainstreaming climate change into Education Strategic Plan 2019- 2023 Strategic Plan and SDG4 Roadmap for Education 2030."

Figure 1: A snapshot from Vanuatu's NDC on education

ADAPTATION PRIORITY AREA: YOUTH							
	Commitment	Sector Policy	Policy Reference	NSDP Reference	SDG Goal Most Relevant	Conditionality (Expressed as %)	Finance Required USD
A85	Vanuatu commits that every child, regardless of climate and disaster circumstances, must be able to access the education system.	Child Protection Policy	V1	SOC 1.2		90	18,000,000
A86	Vanuatu commits that 100% of schools incorporate climate risk management activities in their School Implementation Plans by 2030.	Vanuatu Education Training Sector Strategic Plan	S8	SOC 4.6		60	900,000
A87	Vanuatu commits to reduce gaps in relation to climate disaster responsiveness of school facilities.	Vanuatu Education Training Sector Strategic Plan	S8	SOC 4.6		90	7,500,000
A88	Vanuatu commits to enable youth to play active leadership roles in adapting to climate change, including promote programmes and projects that create awareness, skills and capacities among youth on climate action.	National Youth Development Policy	4.2.4	SOC 4.6		90	1,200,000
A89	Vanuatu commits to introduce concepts of sustainable development in regard to issues involving climate change and the environment at the primary level.	Education Policy Statement	pp7	SOC 4.6		90	650,000

E. Rapid assessment checklist of education in NDCs

There is always more that can be included and delivered in the NDC, so the following checklists provide a framework to rapidly assess the level of inclusion of education in NDCs – in both the updating process and the outcome document itself. This list is not prescriptive nor exhaustive and is not meant to determine the quality of the content included but rather illustrates some concrete areas where the education sector needs and contributions can be included in the NDC. It can be used by stakeholders to check which actions they may be able to take for NDC 3.0 updates.

Checklist to rapidly assess the level of inclusion of education in NDCs

Table 4: Checklist for the process of updating the NDC

Action	Checklist
The Ministry of Education and other key education agencies are engaged in the entire process of updating the NDC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Relevant education data and evidence is analyzed and included in the NDC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Children, youth and education stakeholders are engaged in the NDC process	<input type="checkbox"/>

Table 5: Checklist for the finalized NDC

Level	Action	Checklist
Baseline	The NDC includes a clear entry point for the education sector to support delivery of the NDC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Minimum	The background/national circumstances section recognizes the impact of climate change on education	<input type="checkbox"/>
	The adaptation section recognizes child-focused education as a sector that can address the adaptation gap	<input type="checkbox"/>
	The mitigation section recognizes the role of education, training, and skills development in the achievement of the country's mitigation goals	<input type="checkbox"/>
	The Ministry of Education recognized as a stakeholder involved in the delivery of the NDC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Good, all of the above and at least two of:	The NDC includes an activity addressing the adaptation gaps of the education sector (system strengthening, school safety, resilient infrastructure etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>
	The NDC includes an activity recognizing the role of education in contributing to adaptation, mitigation, wider climate action and the just/green transition (knowledge, skills, behaviors etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>
	The NDC includes education in other relevant areas/sectors' activities e.g. disaster risk management, mitigation, infrastructure etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Best, all of the above, plus:	Education is included as a standalone, prioritized sector with clear time-bound targets	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Education is included in the resource/funding requirement section either as unconditional or conditional area	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Education is included in the monitoring framework with dedicated indicators on education	<input type="checkbox"/>
	The Ministry of Education has an explicit role in the delivery and monitoring of the NDC	<input type="checkbox"/>

F. Considerations

The above provides guidance to countries on what could be covered in an NDC and how. It's important to reiterate that these are example activities and indicators, and there are several other factors that should be taken into consideration, including that this is a country-driven approach, that countries have different responsibilities, capacities and financing available, the need for an inclusive approach and what ambition means to different countries.

Country-driven

The NDCs and NAPs are country-driven processes led by a Ministry or agency and supported by a broader set of stakeholders. The education sector has been largely absent in this process and there is an opportunity to raise awareness on education in climate spaces. This needs to be evidence-based, contextually relevant, strategic and aligned with existing climate change and education policies and plans.

Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities (CBDR-RC)

CBDR is enshrined in the UNFCCC 1992 Treaty acknowledging the different capabilities and responsibilities of individual countries in addressing climate change. This has been a guiding principle since then, splitting countries into Annex 1 or non-Annex 1 countries¹³ depending on their historical contribution to climate change. By adopting the Paris Agreement, the terminology of Annex I countries and Non-Annex I countries was changed to developed and developing countries. Under Article 4 of the Paris Agreement, it is expected that developed countries will take the lead in mitigation of greenhouse gases and finance. The CBDR-RC principle also applies to other areas such as adaptation, technology transfer, and capacity building.

This means that while all countries are required to take mitigation actions, developed countries will consider their historical contributions to climate change, focusing more on their mitigation. CBDR is also closely linked to climate finance.

Finance

When incorporating education strategies into NDCs, it is important to consider how these will be financed, and – where relevant – to identify shortfalls. Available domestic budgets should be considered first to identify how much funding is available for delivering the different activities under the NDC. These are the 'unconditional' activities.

Where a shortfall in the domestic budget has been identified, the country will need to identify alternative sources of funding to deliver the activities under the NDC. These are the 'conditional' activities.

International multilateral climate funds, such as the Green Climate Fund, are increasingly interested in financing education strategies.

¹³ Under the Convention Annex I countries have a greater mitigation role than non-Annex I countries.

Multilateral Development Banks are also increasingly recognizing the co-benefits for climate and other sector investment. Funds such as the Global Partnership for Education are being made available for climate-responsive strategies in education.

Importantly, the eligibility of access to different types of climate finance is dependent on what is prioritized in the NDC and where the shortfalls are.

Ambition

NDCs are designed to be increasingly ambitious. The education sector will need to demonstrate via its inputs into the NDC how it can support the Ministry of Environment and other sectors in being more ambitious on climate action and meeting its commitments on adaptation, mitigation and loss and damage (see [Section D, Table 3](#) and [Annex 5](#) for *example language*). The inclusion of education in NDC 3.0 if there was no previous mention, can also be considered as an increased ambition, given the significant number of children and community members that can benefit from the activities.

Inclusion

A country's NDC can play an important role in identifying populations affected by the impacts of climate change and in setting out education strategies to target these population left behind in existing efforts. Education strategies in the NDC must consider children most impacted by inequality and discrimination and ensure they have a voice and role in decision-making processes and implementation.

Annexes

Annex 1: Key concepts included in this guidance

Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE)	<p>Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE) is a term adopted by the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change to denote work under Article 6 of the Convention and Article 12 of the Paris Agreement.</p> <p>The over-arching goal of ACE is to empower all members of society to engage in climate action, through the six ACE elements – climate change education and public awareness, training, public participation, public access to information, and international cooperation on these issues. (UNFCCC)</p>
Adaptation	<p>Adjustments in ecological, social or economic systems in response to actual or expected climatic stimuli and their effect (UNFCCC)</p>
Climate finance	<p>Local, national or transnational financing—drawn from public, private and alternative sources of financing—that seeks to support mitigation and adaptation actions that will address climate change (UNFCCC)</p>
Just transition	<p>Greening the economy in a way that is as fair and inclusive as possible to everyone concerned, creating decent work opportunities and leaving no one behind. (ILO)</p>
Loss and Damage	<p>Refers to the negative effects of climate change that occur despite mitigation and adaptation efforts. While mitigation addresses the causes of climate change (like reducing greenhouse gas emissions) and adaptation addresses its impacts (like building sea walls to prevent flooding), loss and damage is concerned with the unavoidable and irreversible impacts of the climate crisis (UNEP)</p>
Mitigation	<p>Human interventions to reduce the emissions of greenhouse gases by sources or enhance their removal from the atmosphere by “sinks” (UNFCCC)</p>
National Adaptation Plans	<p>COP16 established the process to formulate and implement NAPs to enable the LDC Parties to formulate and implement NAPs with a view to identifying medium- and long-term adaptation needs and developing and implementing strategies and programmes to address those needs; and invited other developing country Parties to employ the modalities formulated to support NAPs (UNFCCC)</p>
Sendai Framework for DRR 2015–2030	<p>The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 outlines seven clear targets and four priorities for action to prevent new and reduce existing disaster risks: (i) Understanding disaster risk; (ii) Strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk; (iii) Investing in disaster reduction for resilience and; (iv) Enhancing</p>

disaster preparedness for effective response, and to "Build Back Better" in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction.

It aims to achieve the substantial reduction of disaster risk and losses in lives, livelihoods and health and in the economic, physical, social, cultural and environmental assets of persons, businesses, communities and countries over the next 15 years.

The Framework was adopted at the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai, Japan, on March 18, 2015. ([UNDRR](#))

Annex 2: International climate policy governance

UN Framework Convention on Climate Change

The international climate change system comprises the 1992 UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, and the 2015 Paris Agreement. The UNFCCC brought together countries in 1992 at the Rio Earth Summit to agree a collective objective to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations "at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic (human induced) interference with the climate system." It states that "such a level should be achieved within a time-frame sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change, to ensure that food production is not threatened, and to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner."

The UNFCCC established a set of principles and broad obligations relating to mitigation, adaptation, reporting and support for all 198 Parties to the convention. The UNFCCC categorizes Parties into *Annex I – developed country Parties*, and *non-Annex I – developed country Parties* which has implications on their goals and level of support, recognizing that industrialized countries are expected to do the most to cut emissions. For this reason, the Kyoto Protocol, which was adopted in 1997, committed industrialized countries and economies in transition to limit and reduce greenhouse gases emissions in accordance with agreed individual targets. Both the 1997 Kyoto Protocol and the 2015 Paris Agreement are distinct but 'related legal instruments' in that only Parties to the UNFCCC can be Parties to these later instruments.¹

The Paris Agreement

The Paris Agreement further enshrined international obligations to address climate change. It is a legally binding international treaty on climate change which came into force in 2016. It has an overarching goal to hold "the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels" and pursue efforts "to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels." It also sets out measures focusing on adaptation, education, financing and technological cooperation which form part of the annual negotiation agenda of the UNFCCC Conference of Parties (COP). There is an expectation that the Agreement is implemented according to common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, reflecting the different national contexts.

Before Paris, countries submitted carbon reduction targets (known as "intended nationally determined contributions," or INDCs). Under the Paris Agreement, countries are committed

to submit updated NDCs (nationally determined contributions) every 5 years, and each new iteration is expected to be more ambitious than the previous one. For more information on NDCs please refer to [section B](#).

For key features of the Paris Agreement please see [Annex 3](#).

The UNFCCC Secretariat

The UNFCCC also establishes the institutional building blocks for global climate governance. The UNFCCC secretariat (UN Climate Change) is the United Nations entity tasked with supporting the global response to climate change. The secretariat is responsible for facilitating intergovernmental climate change negotiations, technical analysis and review of climate change information, maintaining [the registry for Nationally Determined Contributions \(NDC\)](#) established under the Paris Agreement and organizing and supporting negotiating sessions each year.

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

The [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change \(IPCC\)](#) is the United Nations body for assessing the science related to climate change. It was created to provide policymakers with regular scientific assessments on climate change, its implications and potential future risks, as well as to put forward adaptation and mitigation options.

Education in UNFCCC processes

The Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE) agenda, the main agenda referring to education, was first adopted in 1992 in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change under Article 6. ACE aims to empower all citizens to take climate action through climate change education, training, public awareness, public participation, access to information and international cooperation.

ACE has remained on the climate policy agenda being included in both the Kyoto Protocol (Article 10) and the Paris Agreement (Article 12), reiterating its importance. While ACE is a voluntary article under the Paris Agreement, it does have a recently negotiated 10-year work programme – the Glasgow Work Programme on Action for Climate Empowerment.

Under this work programme, Parties are encouraged *“to strengthen integration of ACE into the development and implementation of national climate policies, plans, strategies and action, including by developing and implementing a national strategy that covers all six ACE elements and facilitates broad cross-sectoral coordination and collaboration.”* Many countries have identified ACE focal points, often within Ministries of Environment, and developed ACE Strategies.

Specifically on education, the work programme, Parties and non-Party stakeholders are encouraged *“to collaborate on, promote, facilitate, develop and implement formal and non-formal education and training programmes focused on climate change at all levels, targeting the involvement of women and youth in particular, including by organizing exchanges or secondments of personnel to provide training for experts.”*

The international community through the UNFCCC process intended to address ACE from its outset and therefore is a legitimate element of the NDC process.

While climate change education’s formal recognition in international and national climate policies is significant in driving action, it should be noted that ACE does not take a comprehensive approach to climate change and education that includes climate change adaptation, preparedness, school safety, resilient school infrastructure. These are also key areas that should be considered in an NDC to ensure children are safe in school and do not have their education disrupted – impacts which would severely undermine the success of ACE’s goal.

Aside from ACE, education has been largely overlooked in other key agendas under the UNFCCC, across mitigation, adaptation, loss and damage and climate finance. Education was recently mentioned in the context of negotiations to advance the adoption of a [Global Goal on Adaptation](#), though not explicitly as a priority sector.

Annex 3: Key features of the Paris Agreement and Article 4 of the Paris Agreement

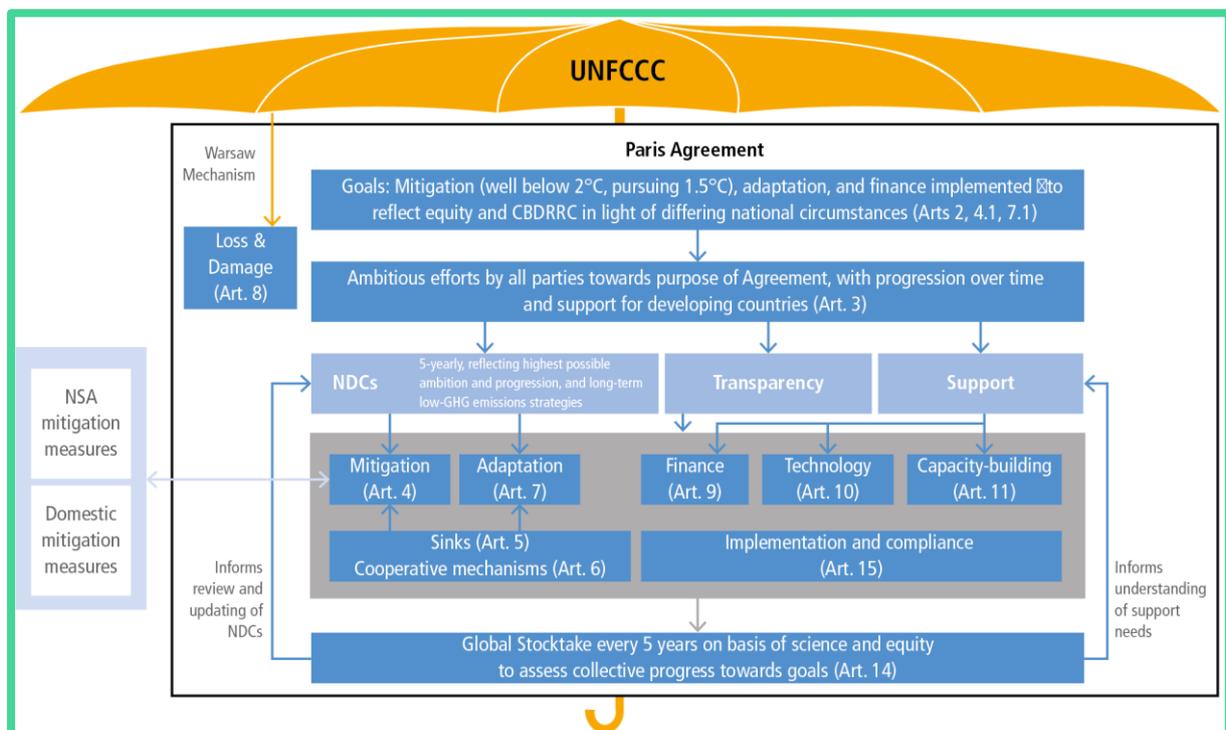


Figure 2: Key features of the Paris Agreement, IPCC, 2023. 6th Assessment Report

Article 4

1. In order to achieve the long-term temperature goal set out in Article 2, Parties aim to reach global peaking of greenhouse gas emissions as soon as possible, recognizing that peaking will take longer for developing country Parties, and to undertake rapid reductions thereafter in accordance with best available science, so as to achieve a balance between anthropogenic emissions by sources and removals by sinks of greenhouse gases in the second half of this century, on the basis of equity, and in the context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty.

2. Each Party shall prepare, communicate and maintain successive nationally determined contributions that it intends to achieve. Parties shall pursue domestic mitigation measures, with the aim of achieving the objectives of such contributions.
3. Each Party's successive nationally determined contribution will represent a progression beyond the Party's then current nationally determined contribution and reflect its highest possible ambition, reflecting its common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, in the light of different national circumstances.
4. Developed country Parties should continue taking the lead by undertaking economy-wide absolute emission reduction targets. Developing country Parties should continue enhancing their mitigation efforts, and are encouraged to move over time towards economy-wide emission reduction or limitation targets in the light of different national circumstances.
5. Support shall be provided to developing country Parties for the implementation of this Article, in accordance with Articles 9, 10 and 11, recognizing that enhanced support for developing country Parties will allow for higher ambition in their actions.
6. The least developed countries and small island developing States may prepare and communicate strategies, plans and actions for low greenhouse gas emissions development reflecting their special circumstances.
7. Mitigation co-benefits resulting from Parties' adaptation actions and/or economic diversification plans can contribute to mitigation outcomes under this Article.
8. In communicating their nationally determined contributions, all Parties shall provide the information necessary for clarity, transparency and understanding in accordance with decision 1/CP.21 and any relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to this Agreement.
9. Each Party shall communicate a nationally determined contribution every five years in accordance with decision 1/CP.21 and any relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to this Agreement and be informed by the outcomes of the global stocktake referred to in Article 14.
10. The Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to this Agreement shall consider common time frames for nationally determined contributions at its first session.
11. A Party may at any time adjust its existing nationally determined contribution with a view to enhancing its level of ambition, in accordance with guidance adopted by the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to this Agreement.
12. Nationally determined contributions communicated by Parties shall be recorded in a public registry maintained by the secretariat.
13. Parties shall account for their nationally determined contributions. In accounting for anthropogenic emissions and removals corresponding to their nationally determined contributions, Parties shall promote environmental integrity, transparency, accuracy, completeness, comparability and consistency, and ensure the avoidance of double counting, in accordance with guidance adopted by the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to this Agreement.

14. In the context of their nationally determined contributions, when recognizing and implementing mitigation actions with respect to anthropogenic emissions and removals, Parties should take into account, as appropriate, existing methods and guidance under the Convention, in the light of the provisions of paragraph 13 of this Article.

15. Parties shall take into consideration in the implementation of this Agreement the concerns of Parties with economies most affected by the impacts of response measures, particularly developing country Parties.

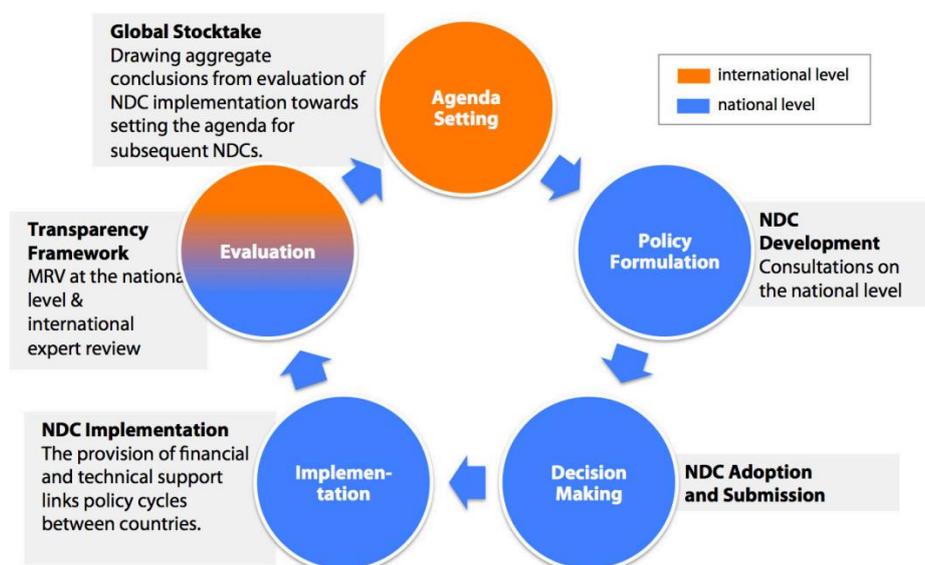
16. Parties, including regional economic integration organizations and their member States, that have reached an agreement to act jointly under paragraph 2 of this Article shall notify the secretariat of the terms of that agreement, including the emission level allocated to each Party within the relevant time period, when they communicate their nationally determined contributions. The secretariat shall in turn inform the Parties and signatories to the Convention of the terms of that agreement.

17. Each party to such an agreement shall be responsible for its emission level as set out in the agreement referred to in paragraph 16 of this Article in accordance with paragraphs 13 and 14 of this Article and Articles 13 and 15.

18. If Parties acting jointly do so in the framework of, and together with, a regional economic integration organization which is itself a Party to this Agreement, each member State of that regional economic integration organization individually, and together with the regional economic integration organization, shall be responsible for its emission level as set out in the agreement communicated under paragraph 16 of this Article in accordance with paragraphs 13 and 14 of this Article and Articles 13 and 15.

19. All Parties should strive to formulate and communicate long-term low greenhouse gas emission development strategies, mindful of Article 2 taking into account their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, in the light of different national circumstances.

Annex 4: The NDC Cycle¹⁴



¹⁴ Figure taken from the Wuppertal Institute (2018) Article 6 and the Global Stocktake

Annex 5: Further activities and indicators for other possible NDC sectors

Priority sector	Example messaging/ activities	Targets/ indicators
Agriculture	<p>Enhance the adoption of climate-smart agriculture (and aquaculture) technologies and practices through the integration of climate-smart agriculture topics and solutions in the formal education curriculum and in relevant training programs.</p> <p>Develop gender-responsive climate-smart agriculture (and aquaculture) education and training, re-skilling and upskilling programs.</p> <p>Build an agricultural workforce, including youth, with the knowledge and skills needed to support a climate-resilient and climate-smart agriculture sector.</p>	<p>Climate adaptation and mitigation concepts and practices integrated into Agriculture curriculum and agriculture extension and training programs</p> <p># of participants (disaggregated by gender) trained in climate vulnerability assessments, climate risk management, greenhouse gas inventory, etc. for the agriculture sector</p> <p># of degrees and certificates awarded in climate-smart agriculture-related fields of study or training</p>
Energy	<p>Deploy renewable energy technologies and practices in public school buildings and public education infrastructure and facilities.</p> <p>Develop gender-responsive green energy upskilling and re-skilling programs for youth employed in high-emitting energy sector jobs.</p> <p>Invest in youth “eco-preneurs” developing innovative green energy technologies, practices, and businesses.</p>	<p>% of schools that use energy-efficiency practices, renewable energy sources, energy-efficient appliances and technologies, energy- and water-saving devices, weather insulation, etc.</p> <p>% more education and training institutions offering green energy-related fields of study or training</p> <p># of youth entrepreneurs receiving green energy start-up funds or loans</p>
Health	<p>Enhance the awareness of the impact of climate change on health and the adoption of climate-resilient health practices and behaviors through the integration of climate-related health</p>	<p>Climate-related topics integrated in Health, Life Skills, Biology, and Life Sciences-related curriculum in gender-responsive ways</p>

	<p>topics, behaviors, and solutions in the formal education curriculum.</p> <p>Build a climate-resilient health workforce with the knowledge and skills to support climate-resilient health sector and service delivery.</p> <p>Invest in programs that allow students and youth to participate in the research and development of climate-resilient health sector technologies, materials, practices, and behaviors.</p>	<p>% of teachers trained to incorporate climate-related health topics, issues and solutions in their teaching (disaggregated by subject area)</p> <p># of students and youth entrepreneurs participating in climate-resilient health projects</p>
Transportation	<p>Deploy clean or low-carbon transportation options and mobility practices, including low-emissions fuels or electric vehicles or mobility devices, to support access to education.</p> <p>Develop gender-responsive clean transportation-related education and training programs to build a clean transportation workforce, targeting early adolescents and adolescents.</p>	<p>% of schools that use low-carbon or clean transportation and/or refueling options to facilitate access to school</p> <p>% of students who take clean or low-carbon transportation to school (disaggregated by transportation type)</p>
Waste Management	<p>Initiate school composting programs to reduce the amount of food waste to landfills from schools</p> <p>Develop information, education, and communication (IEC) materials to build knowledge, awareness, skills, and behaviors necessary for widespread adoption of sustainable waste management practices.</p>	<p>% of schools that have adopted on-site composting programs.</p> <p>% of schools that successfully sort waste materials for recycling.</p> <p># of IEC materials developed on sustainable waste management practices and behaviors</p>



Students in Cambodia pick plants from a floating garden by their school

Linh Pham / Save the Children