

Local Voices for Peace and Climate Resilience:

Integrating
Climate Action
into the
Localization of
the Women,
Peace and
Security, and
Youth, Peace
and Security
Agendas

gnwp

Global Network of
Women Peacebuilders



In partnership with

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Executive Summary

Climate change is increasingly reshaping peace and security in conflict-affected contexts. In Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Lebanon, and Nigeria, climate-related shocks such as droughts, floods, environmental degradation, and resource scarcity are compounding existing drivers of conflict, displacement, food insecurity, and inequality. Women, girls, and young people are disproportionately affected by these impacts, while also playing critical roles in resilience, social cohesion, and peacebuilding.

This report presents findings from participatory research conducted by the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP) with 27 local partner organizations as part of a project supported by Global Affairs Canada's Stabilization Operations Program (PSOP). It examines how climate change influences conflict dynamics, assesses the extent to which climate action is integrated with the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) and Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) agendas, and identifies effective approaches for strengthening locally-led responses. The findings reveal a persistent gap between policy commitments and implementation, with participating civil society organizations rating the level of integration of climate action and WPS/YPS at an average of 3.1 out of 5. At the same time, the research highlights clear and practical pathways for progress. When asked to identify the most effective approaches for integrating climate action with the WPS and YPS agendas, 52 per cent of participating organizations identified women and youth participation, 48 per cent identified capacity-building and training, and 30 per cent highlighted community-embedded approaches.

The report also sheds light on important barriers. Local organizations continue to face limited access to direct and flexible funding, insufficient participation in decision-making processes, weak accountability mechanisms, and inadequate protection from climate-related violence and insecurity. To address these challenges, the research findings call for stronger policy coherence across climate, WPS, and YPS frameworks; increased investment in locally led initiatives; greater participation and leadership of women and youth; strengthened protection mechanisms; and more direct, flexible funding for local organizations.

Ultimately, the findings demonstrate that integrating climate action with the WPS and YPS agendas is not only a policy objective but a practical necessity for building resilient, peaceful, and inclusive communities in conflict-affected contexts.

Introduction

Climate change is increasingly recognized as a threat multiplier that exacerbates conflict, displacement, insecurity, and inequality. In fragile and conflict-affected contexts, climate-related shocks such as droughts, floods, environmental degradation, and resource scarcity can deepen existing vulnerabilities and undermine efforts to build sustainable peace. Women, girls, and young people are often disproportionately affected by these impacts, while also playing critical roles in strengthening resilience and advancing peacebuilding efforts.

This report examines the intersections between climate action, the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda, and the Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) agenda in Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Lebanon, and Nigeria. It seeks to better understand how climate change affects peace and security dynamics and to identify opportunities for more integrated and inclusive responses.

The analysis draws on participatory research conducted by GNWP with 27 local partner organizations, using surveys and interviews. Responses were then coded following an Inductive coding method, and the frequency of each parent code and subcode was analyzed. By centering local perspectives and experiences, the report contributes evidence to support more integrated, gender-responsive, and youth-inclusive approaches to climate resilience and sustainable peace.

Country Overviews: Gendered Climate Impacts in Conflict-Affected Contexts

Colombia

Colombia is a post-conflict country that is marked by persistent armed violence in rural and peripheral regions, despite the 2016 Peace Agreement. Armed groups continue to dispute territorial control in resource-rich areas, particularly in the Pacific, Caribbean, Amazon, and border regions. These intersect with climate-related risks, reinforcing displacement issues, insecurity, and exclusion. This is particularly true for rural, Indigenous, Afrodescendant communities and women-led households.¹

Climate change acts as a threat multiplier in Colombia, intensifying droughts, floods, landslides, and ecosystem degradation. Extreme weather events disproportionately affect rural livelihoods dependent on agriculture, fishing, and informal economies, where women play the primary role. Climate-related disasters increase food insecurity, unpaid care burdens, and exposure to sexual and gender-based violence during

displacement and humanitarian emergencies. In regions such as La Guajira and the Caribbean coast, prolonged drought and water scarcity have affected women and girls. For example, in La Guajira, prolonged drought and water scarcity disproportionately affect Indigenous Wayuu women and girls, who are primarily responsible for securing water and may travel long distances under unsafe conditions.² In the Pacific region, recurrent flooding has displaced Afro-Colombian communities, where women and girls face heightened risks of gender-based violence and loss of livelihoods.

Climate risks directly affect women, girls, and youth peacebuilders by reducing community cohesion and resilience and limiting civic participation. Environmental degradation and land dispossession, which are often linked to extractive industries and illegal economies, fuel local conflicts and constrain safe spaces for women's leadership. Young women and youth peacebuilders

¹ International Crisis Group, A New Phase of Conflict in Colombia?, 2023, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/latin-america-caribbean/andes/colombia>.

² Navarro, Karen. "Ideas on How to Break Gender Barriers in Colombia's Water Sector." World Bank Blogs, August 2020. <https://blogs.worldbank.org/en/water/ideas-how-break-gender-barriers-colombias-water-sector>.

face increased barriers to organizing and sustaining peace initiatives in this climate-driven displacement, insecurity, and digital and physical threats.³

Democratic Republic of Congo

As of June 2026, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is still affected by persistent instability and armed conflict, particularly in the eastern provinces, where multiple armed groups, such as the M23, continue to operate amid weak state presence and contested control over land and natural resources such as gold, cobalt, and copper. Ongoing violence, political instability, and governance challenges have contributed to one of the world's largest displacement crises, with more than 7 million internally displaced persons nationwide, exacerbating humanitarian needs and social fragmentation.⁴

3 Women's Peace & Humanitarian Fund (WPHF), Women and Climate Security, accessed 2026, <https://wphfund.org/women-and-climate-security>

4 Council on Foreign Relations, Violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Global Conflict Tracker, accessed 2026, <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/violence-democratic-republic-congo>.

Like in Colombia, climate change acts as a significant threat multiplier in the DRC, intensifying floods, droughts, and environmental degradation that disproportionately affect women and girls. Extreme weather events disrupt agriculture, food systems, and access to water. These are sectors in which women are primary actors, all of which increase unpaid care burdens and exposure to sexual and gender based violence during displacement and resource scarcity. Climate disruptions also threaten livelihoods in rural areas, deepening poverty and gender inequality.⁵

Climate-related displacement and competition over land and resources heighten local tensions and restrict civic space for women, girls, and youth peacebuilders. Environmental stress fuels conflict and weakens community unity, limiting safe participation in peace initiatives and local decision-making. Young women and youth peacebuilders face marginalization and barriers as climate insecurity intersects with conflict, obstructing

5 Planetary Security Initiative, Climate, Peace and Security in Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, accessed 2026, <https://www.planetarysecurityinitiative.org/news/climate-peace-and-security-eastern-democratic-republic-congo>.



their climate justice activities, as well as limiting their access to education, resources, and protection mechanisms.⁶

Lebanon

Lebanon is experiencing a compounded crisis due to prolonged political paralysis, economic collapse, social unrest, and constant armed violence. Since 2019, the country has faced one of the world's most severe economic crises, alongside ripple effects from regional conflicts and escalating insecurity along its southern border. These dynamics have weakened state institutions, strained public services, and increased vulnerability for women, refugees, and marginalized communities.⁷

Within this fragile context, climate change has intensified existing structural vulnerabilities through rising temperatures, prolonged droughts, water scarcity, and increased wildfire risks. These environmental stressors exacerbate food insecurity, disrupt agricultural livelihoods, and deepen economic precarity, which disproportionately affects women, who are the main actors in informal labor and unpaid care roles. Climate-related disruptions have also been linked to heightened risks of gender-based violence and reduced access to essential services during periods of crisis.⁸

As climate stress worsens social and political instability, civic space continues to shrink, limiting opportunities for women, girls, and youth peacebuilders to engage safely in community leadership and peace initiatives. The lack of resources and economic strain heighten local tensions, while displacement

and service disruptions hurt social cohesion. Young women and youth peacebuilders face additional challenges as climate insecurity intersects with unemployment, restricted mobility, and weakened protection mechanisms. The renewed escalation of hostilities in 2026 has further exacerbated climate-related vulnerabilities for women and young women by increasing displacement, protection risks, and barriers to participating in climate action and peacebuilding efforts.

Nigeria

In 2026, Nigeria still faces overlapping security crises due to violent extremism in the northeast, armed organized crime, and mass kidnappings in the northwest. Additionally, there are persistent farmer-herder conflicts across the Middle Belt. This recurrent violence is combined with weak governance and limited state presence in many rural areas, which causes widespread displacement and insecurity. As of 2026, more than 3.7 million people are internally displaced, with women and children disproportionately affected by prolonged instability and humanitarian need.⁹

Climate change intensifies these dynamics through recurrent flooding, desertification, and erratic rainfall, which undermine agricultural livelihoods and the availability of natural resources. Nigeria has experienced increasingly severe floods in recent years, displacing communities, destroying crops, and accelerating food insecurity, especially in states with recurring flooding. These climate stressors have gendered impacts, as women are at a greater disadvantage due to discriminatory gender norms. As in Colombia, DRC, and Lebanon, women are also more likely to depend on agriculture, informal trade, and natural resources, while also being unpaid caretakers during displacement and recovery.¹⁰

6 Women in Peacebuilding Collective (WIPC), News and Analysis on Women, Conflict, and Peacebuilding, accessed 2026, <https://wipc.org/category/news/>

7 World Bank, Lebanon Economic Monitor: The Deliberate Depression, 2023, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/lebanon/publication/lebanon-economic-monitor>

8 UNDP, Lebanon Gender Analysis for Climate Action and NDC Implementation, Climate Promise, accessed 2026, https://climatepromise.undp.org/sites/default/files/research_report_document/undp-ndcsp-lebanon-gender-analysis-report.pdf

9 UNHCR, Nigeria Country Operational Data, accessed 2026, <https://data.unhcr.org/en/country/nga>

10 Idehai, Ifeyinwa, et al., "Climate Change, Gender, and Conflict Dynamics in Nigeria," *Journal of Political Ecology* 32, no. 1 (2025), <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14735903.2025.2534316>

As climate stress deepens competition over land and water, local conflicts escalate, and civic space for women, girls, and youth peacebuilders narrows. Climate-related displacement interrupts education and community networks, limiting young women's ability to engage in peacebuilding and leadership initiatives. In conflict-affected regions of Nigeria, women and youth peacebuilders are more prone to violence, restricted mobility, and reduced access to resources needed to sustain their work, as climate insecurity compounds existing gender and security inequalities.¹¹

¹¹ OCHA Nigeria, Nigeria Commemorates Humanitarians and Alerts Citizens to the Alarming Effects of Climate Change, 2024, <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/nigeria/nigeria-commemorates-humanitarians-and-alerts-citizens-alarming-effects-climate>

Policy Frameworks on Climate, WPS, and YPS

Colombia

Colombia has relatively strong policies addressing WPS, YPS, and climate change. The country adopted its first National Action Plan (NAP) on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) in 2024,¹² which reaffirms commitments to women's participation, protection, and prevention in conflict settings. Colombia is also developing its first NAP on Youth, Peace and Security (YPS),¹³ and a National Development Plan (NDP) 2022-2026 that places climate action and decarbonization as a top priority.¹⁴

Despite this extensive policy landscape, these frameworks remain largely siloed. The WPS NAP recognizes the differentiated impacts of conflict on women but gives limited attention to climate change as a driver of insecurity and displacement.¹⁵ On the other hand, climate policies acknowledge social

vulnerability and territorial inequality, but rarely address women's leadership in peacebuilding or the specific risks faced by women and youth peacebuilders in climate-affected and conflict zones. Additionally, strategies focused on youth similarly tend to operate separately, with limited integration of gender and conflict-sensitive climate considerations. As a result, implementation often falls short at the local level, particularly in rural and post-conflict areas, which are more exposed to climate shocks.¹⁶ These gaps underscore the need for greater policy harmonization across climate, WPS, and YPS frameworks in Colombia. Aligning these agendas would enable more comprehensive responses to climate-related conflict risks, strengthen protections for women and youth peacebuilders, and ensure that adaptation and peacebuilding efforts reinforce one another.

Democratic Republic of Congo

In 2019, the DRC adopted a NAP on WPS, and in 2022, a NAP on YPS. These two plans recognize the roles of women and youth in peacebuilding and prevention in a context marked

¹² UN Women, "The Peace Deal That Put Women First: What Colombia Taught the World," July 2025, <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news-stories/feature-story/2025/07/the-peace-deal-that-put-women-first-what-colombia-taught-the-world>

¹³ ConnexUs, Youth, Peace and Security in Colombia, accessed 2026, <https://cnxus.org/resource/youth-peace-security-in-colombia>

¹⁴ Climate Action Tracker, Colombia: Policies and Action, accessed 2026, <https://climateactiontracker.org/countries/colombia/policies-action>

¹⁵ República de Colombia, Plan de Acción Nacional Mujeres, Paz y Seguridad, 2025, https://wpsfocal-pointsnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/articulos-397916_recurso_2.pdf

¹⁶ New Security Beat, "Unsung Heroines: Climate Action Across Global Peace and Security Agendas," February 2020, <https://www.newsecuritybeat.org/2020/02/unsung-sheroes-climate-action-global-peace-security-agendas/>

by conflict and displacement. In parallel, the DRC has adopted national climate and environmental policies, including its National Climate Change Policy and Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), which emphasize adaptation and resilience in areas such as forestation, agriculture, water, and energy, among others.¹⁷

Similar to Colombia, despite these policies, climate, WPS, and YPS frameworks remain largely siloed. The WPS and YPS action plans acknowledge gender inequality and youth exclusion in conflict settings but give limited attention to climate change as an important cause of violence, displacement, and resource competition. In contrast, climate policies focus on environmental degradation, resilience, and adaptation but rarely address women's leadership, protection for women and young peacebuilders, and women's presence in climate negotiations.¹⁸

These gaps point to a critical need for greater policy harmonization across climate, WPS, and YPS agendas in the DRC. Integrating gender and conflict-sensitive climate analysis into peace and youth frameworks would strengthen protections for women and young peacebuilders,¹⁹ while ensuring that climate adaptation efforts contribute to conflict prevention and social cohesion. Existing national commitments provide entry points for coordinated, localized approaches that bridge environmental governance and human rights in fragile settings.



Lebanon

Lebanon has several relevant policy instruments on WPS, YPS, and climate governance. Lebanon adopted its first NAP on WPS in 2019. This effort was led by the National Commission for Lebanese Women, and prioritizes women's participation, protection, and prevention in security-related issues.²⁰ On the climate side, Lebanon submitted an updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) in 2025 and continues to develop national adaptation planning and climate policy frameworks to guide mitigation and adaptation actions.²¹ Lebanon did not formally adopt a national YPS action plan, but it is actively engaged in the YPS agenda and is supported by UN initiatives to integrate young people into national stability efforts.²²

Across these frameworks, gender and climate sensitivity are uneven. The WPS NAP is explicitly centered on women's rights and participation, but it gives limited

17 UNDP Climate Promise, Democratic Republic of the Congo: Nationally Determined Contribution and Climate Priorities, accessed 2026, <https://climatepromise.undp.org/what-we-do/where-we-work/congo-democratic-republic>

18 Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security (GI-WPS), Women's Leadership as the Missing Link in Climate Action at COP30, November 2025, <https://giwps.georgetown.edu/2025/11/11/policy-paper-womens-leadership-as-the-missing-link-in-climate-action-at-cop30/>

19 UN Women, Facts and Figures: Women, Peace and Security, accessed 2026, <https://www.unwomen.org/en/articles/facts-and-figures/facts-and-figures-women-peace-and-security>

20 Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), "Lebanon Finally Adopts Its First National Action Plan for Lebanese Women," September 20, 2019, <https://www.securitywomen.org/post/lebanon-finally-adopts-its-first-national-action-plan-for-lebanese-women>

21 NDC Partnership, Lebanon Country Profile, accessed 2026, <https://ndcpartnership.org/country/lbn>

22 Search for Common Ground, Lebanon Youth, Peace and Security Initiative, LinkedIn post, accessed 2026, https://www.linkedin.com/posts/search-for-common-ground_lebanon-youth-peace-and-security-activity-7415057712843177985-D_OQ/

attention to climate change. Lebanon's climate commitments increasingly reference inclusive approaches and gender inclusion, yet women's leadership and the differentiated risks faced by women and girls are not consistently operationalized in climate planning and implementation. A dedicated gender analysis for climate action in Lebanon reinforces that climate policies require clearer gender integration, sex disaggregated data, and stronger mechanisms to translate commitments into action.²³

The main silos in Lebanon are institutional and thematic: WPS implementation is typically led through women-focused national mechanisms, while climate policy is led through environment and climate institutions, with limited structured coordination between the two. Youth policy similarly tends to run on a separate track. Opportunities for harmonization could include using Lebanon's NDC to explicitly incorporate women's participation and protection measures in crisis contexts, and ensuring that WPS and youth strategies account for climate-related risks as factors that shape insecurity and displacement, thereby creating a more coherent and gender-responsive policy.

Nigeria

Nigeria adopted its first NAP on WPS in 2013, followed by a second NAP in 2017. Nigeria also adopted a NAP on YPS in 2021, becoming the first country in Africa to do so. Moreover, Nigeria's climate framework includes its National Climate Change Policy, Climate Change Act from 2021, and an updated Nationally Determined Contribution from 2025 that commits to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 32 per cent by 2035.²⁴

While these frameworks seem promising, gender across climate and security policies remains a challenge. Similarly to other countries, Nigeria's WPS and YPS action plans acknowledge gender inequalities and youth marginalization, but they give limited attention to climate change as a driver of conflict, displacement, and insecurity. On the other hand, climate policies recognize social vulnerability and community resilience but do not consistently address women's leadership in peacebuilding or the protection risks faced by women human rights defenders and youth peacebuilders operating in conflict environments with climate challenges.

These disconnects reveal policy silos between climate, security, gender, and youth. Climate governance is largely managed through environmental and economic institutions, while WPS and YPS implementation is led through separate peace and gender mechanisms, resulting in fragmented responses at national and subnational levels. However, Nigeria's existing legal and policy architecture offers entry points for harmonization. It is possible to integrate gender and climate analysis into the implementation of the WPS and YPS agendas, thus ensuring that climate adaptation strategies meaningfully engage women and youth peacebuilders. Doing so would strengthen coherence, improve local impact, and enhance protection and participation in fragile and climate-affected contexts.²⁵

²³ UNDP, Lebanon Gender Analysis for Climate Action and NDC Implementation, accessed 2026, https://climatepromise.undp.org/sites/default/files/research_report_document/undp-ndcsp-lebanon-gender-analysis-report.pdf.

²⁴ NDC Partnership, Nigeria Country Profile, accessed 2026, <https://ndcpartnership.org/country/nga>

²⁵ OCHA Nigeria, Nigeria Commemorates Humanitarians and Alerts Citizens to the Alarming Effects of Climate Change, 2024, <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/nigeria/nigeria-commemorates-humanitarians-and-alerts-citizens-alarming-effects-climate>

GNWP's Added Value: Harmonizing WPS, YPS, and Climate Action Through Localization & Partnerships

The country analyses presented in Sections 3 and 4 reveal two interconnected challenges. First, climate change is increasingly affecting conflict dynamics, livelihoods, displacement, and community security in ways that disproportionately impact women, girls, and youth across Colombia, the DRC, Lebanon, and Nigeria. Second, although all four countries have developed policy frameworks related to WPS, YPS, and climate action, these frameworks often remain fragmented and are rarely implemented in an integrated manner at the local level. The findings presented in this section draw on participatory research conducted with 27 GNWP local partner organizations across Colombia, the DRC, Lebanon, and Nigeria. Through surveys and interviews, partners shared their experiences of how climate change affects peace and security dynamics, assessed the

integration of climate action with WPS and YPS, and identified effective approaches for strengthening locally-led responses. Their perspectives provide the evidence base for the analysis and recommendations that follow.

Integrating climate action with WPS and YPS is important because climate-related insecurity does not affect all groups equally. Women, girls, and young people often face heightened risks from displacement, loss of livelihoods, resource scarcity, and violence, while also playing critical roles in community resilience, conflict prevention, and peacebuilding. Strengthening the integration of these agendas helps ensure that climate responses are inclusive, locally relevant, and responsive to the needs, capacities, and leadership of those most affected.

The participatory research indicates that this integration gap is widely

recognized on the ground. Integration refers to the extent to which climate action efforts incorporate the participation, protection, and leadership of women and youth. As shown in Figure 1, partner organizations rated the level of integration between climate action and WPS/YPS at an average of 3.1 out of 5, indicating that integration remains uneven across contexts and countries. This shows the importance of adapting each implementation to its context and focusing capacity building on local actors. Ratings ranged from 2.3 in Colombia to 3.9 in Nigeria, highlighting both progress and persistent challenges in aligning these agendas in practice.

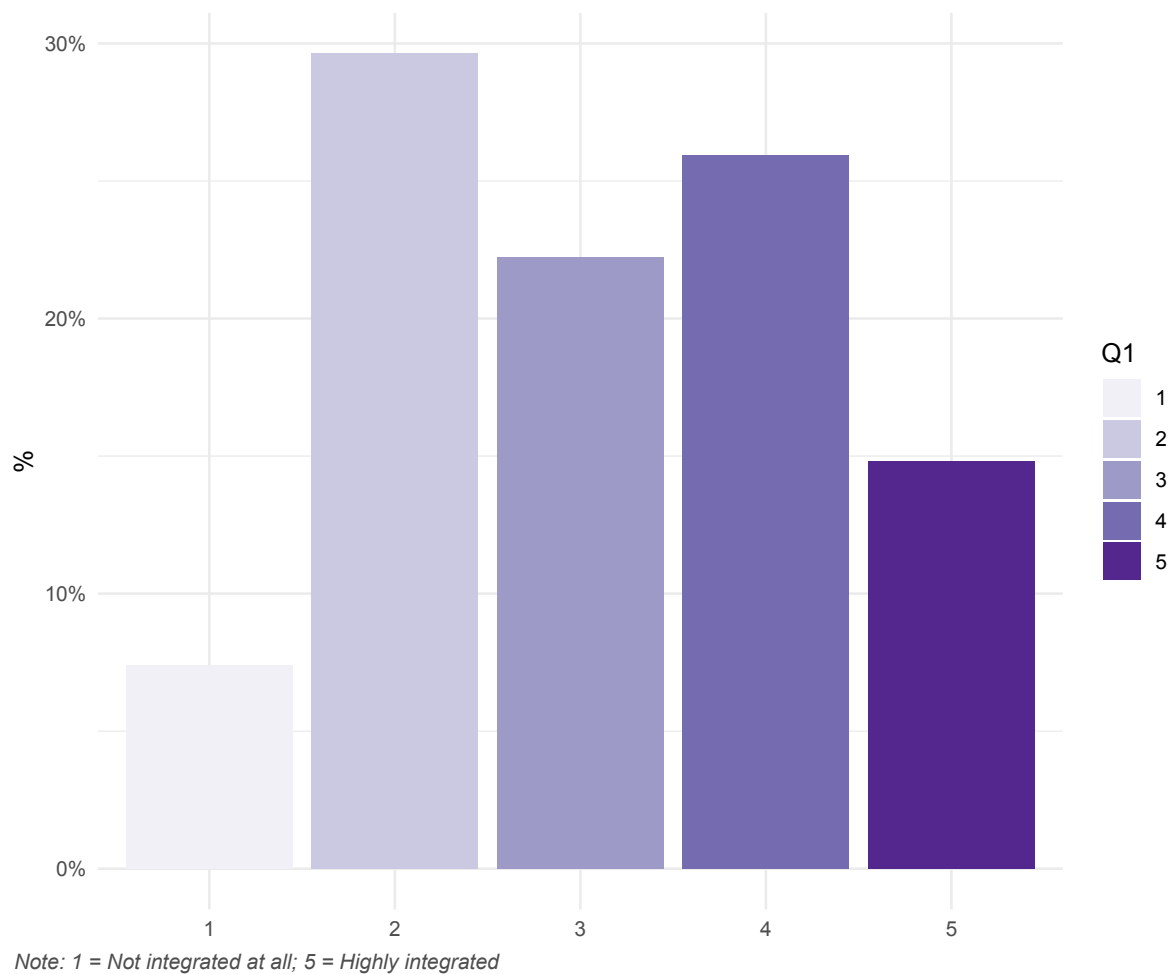
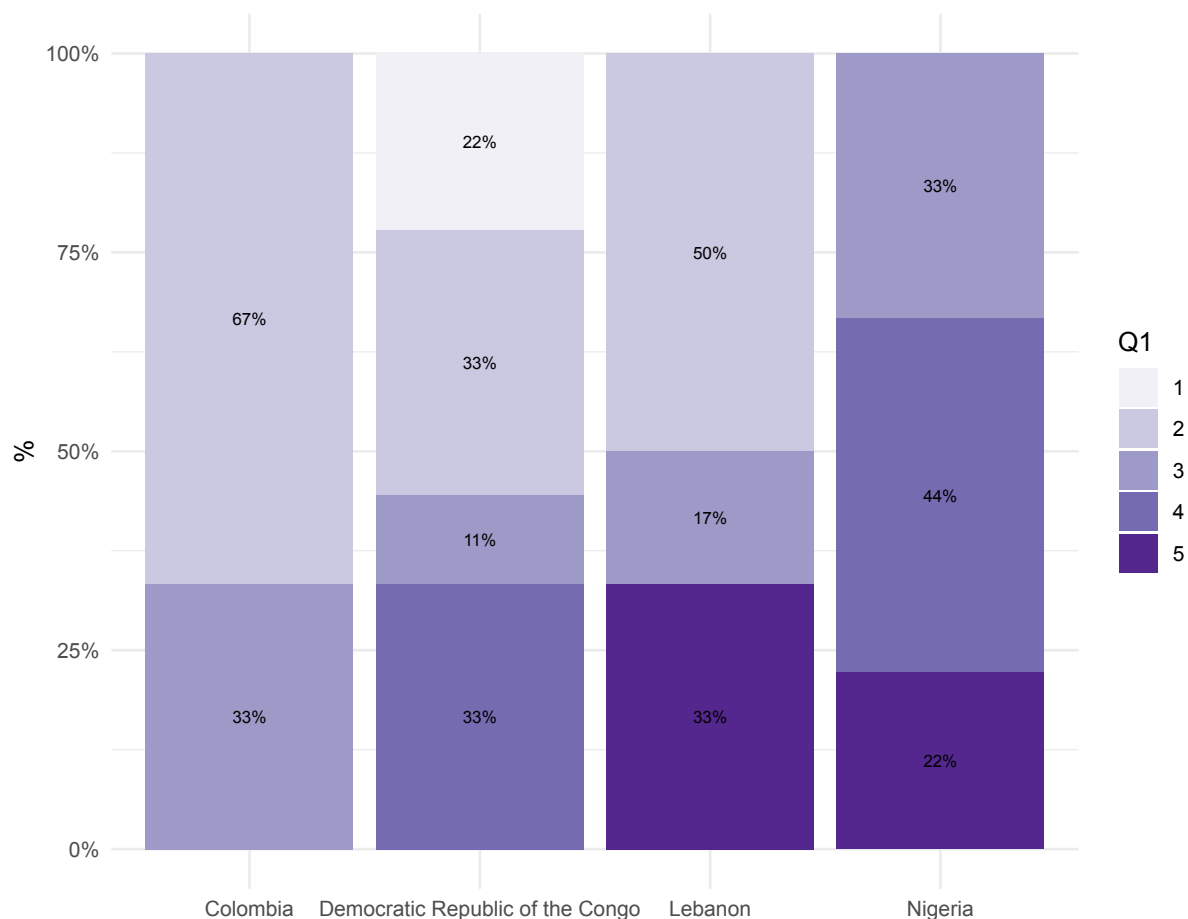


Figure 1: “On a scale of 1–5, how would you rate the level of integration between climate action and WPS/YPS in your context?”

Figure 2 shows important differences in how partner organizations perceive the integration of climate action with the WPS and YPS agendas across the four countries. While respondents in Nigeria generally reported stronger levels of integration, respondents in Colombia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo perceived greater challenges in aligning these agendas. Although experiences vary by context, no country consistently reported full integration, underscoring the need for localized approaches that strengthen connections among climate action, peacebuilding, gender equality, and youth participation.



Note: Percentages sum to 100% within each country. 1 = Not integrated at all; 5 = Highly integrated

Figure. 2: Answers per country to the question “On a scale of 1–5, how would you rate the level of integration between climate action and WPS/YPS in your context?”

Yet the same research also points clearly to what works. When asked about effective approaches, partners most frequently cited women and youth participation (52 per cent), capacity building and training (48 per cent), and community-embedded practices (30 per cent). These three patterns—not isolated successes—shape the evidence presented throughout this section.

The experiences documented in this participatory research suggest that localization provides a practical pathway for addressing both challenges simultaneously. By supporting local action planning, multi-stakeholder coordination, climate-security capacity building, and community-led responses, GNWP and its partners help translate national commitments into locally owned solutions that respond directly to the realities identified throughout this report.

The following sections illustrate how this approach has been translated into practice through GNWP’s work with local partners. Drawing on partner experiences, they highlight four complementary pathways that have strengthened the integration of climate action with the WPS and YPS agendas.

5.1 Integrating Climate Change into WPS and YPS Action Plans

A key finding emerging from the research is the growing recognition among local partners that climate-related risks must be incorporated into peacebuilding, gender equality, and youth engagement frameworks.

GNWP and its partners have worked to address this gap by supporting dialogue

on integrating climate-related challenges into existing WPS and YPS action plans and strategies. Through consultations, workshops, and participatory planning processes, local stakeholders have been encouraged to identify the ways in which climate change affects women, youth, and community security and to reflect these realities in local planning and advocacy efforts.

Several partners described this integration work directly. In Colombia, Fundación Escuelas de Paz (FEP) has embedded environmental protection as a core programmatic line, centering youth collectives' work on protecting wetlands and planting native tree species in conflict-affected areas. Their Forests of Memory project in Caquetá brings together adolescents and young people around both environmental recovery and peacebuilding. In Nigeria, the Foundation for Justice Development and Peace (FJDP) described bringing together women, youth, and community members to jointly develop action plans that link conflict resolution with climate adaptation.

As one Colombian partner explained:

“In community workshops held in the departments of Magdalena and Bolívar, women and young people identified the impacts of climate change and proposed mitigation measures, thereby strengthening their leadership in risk management. Following advocacy efforts by two citizen-led initiatives on social protection and environmental protection, local authorities made institutional commitments that expanded the participation of women and young people in decision-making.”

- Local CSO, Colombia

The examples presented above directly respond to the gaps identified in Section 4. While national WPS, YPS, and climate frameworks often operate separately,

local action-planning processes create opportunities to address climate-related risks through existing peacebuilding and inclusion mechanisms. In doing so, they help translate policy commitments into practical responses that reflect the lived realities described in Section 3.

5.2 Localization Processes and Local Steering Committees

Partners consistently identified localization as one of the most effective approaches for strengthening participation, coordination, and community ownership. Localization is the process of translating global and national commitments on WPS and YPS into locally owned action. By placing women, youth, civil society organizations, and local authorities at the center of decision-making and implementation, localization helps bridge the gap between policy commitments and community-level impact. The participatory research demonstrated that local actors possess critical knowledge of how climate change interacts with conflict, insecurity, and inequality in their communities. However, these perspectives are often underrepresented in national and international policy discussions.

Through partnerships with community-based organizations, women's groups, youth networks, local authorities, and other stakeholders, GNWP supports processes that place local actors at the center of decision-making. The survey data reflects the importance of this work: 44 per cent of partner organizations (12/27) identified the development or implementation of local action plans as among their most effective approaches, and 37 per cent (10/27) specifically highlighted the inclusion of women and youth in decision-making processes. Partners who participated directly in localization initiatives identified this approach as one of the most



effective methods to strengthen participation and coordination. A partner from Lebanon’s Social Development Initiative described the localization of WPS and YPS organized by the Permanent Peace Movement and GNWP as “a highly effective method.”

Local Steering Committees play an important role within this approach. These multi-stakeholder platforms bring together representatives from civil society, local government, women’s organizations, youth groups, and community leaders to identify priorities, discuss climate-security risks, and coordinate responses.



In the DRC, partners from the Union Congolaise des Femmes des Médias (UCOFEM) described their involvement in local committees established to implement United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 2250. These structures created opportunities for trained civil society actors to influence local governance and peacebuilding processes while strengthening cooperation between local stakeholders. The DRC also recorded the lowest average integration rating among the four countries surveyed (2.56/5), highlighting the particular urgency of strengthening localization and participation mechanisms in contexts where integration between climate action and WPS/YPS frameworks remains at an early stage.



As discussed in Section 3, climate-related insecurity often limits opportunities for participation and leadership among women and youth. This was borne out directly by the survey: 26 per cent of partners (7/27) identified lack of direct participation as a key barrier to integration, and a further 22 per cent of partners (6/27) recommended strengthening women’s and youth participation in decision-making as a priority action for governments, donors, and UN agencies. Localization processes and Local Steering Committees help address this challenge by creating structured spaces for engagement, dialogue, and decision-making. Crucially, they also serve

a peacebuilding function: by bringing together actors who may not otherwise collaborate — civil society, local authorities, women’s groups, and youth networks — these structures help rebuild trust and strengthen social cohesion in communities where climate stress and conflict have eroded both.

5.3 Climate-Security Workshops and Community Climate Response Strategies

Building local capacity emerged as one of the most effective approaches identified by partner organizations. Across all four countries, 67 per cent of respondents (18/27) identified capacity-building and training or partnerships as among their most effective strategies — the highest-rated approach of all six options presented. Respondents consistently highlighted the importance of training, awareness-raising, and knowledge-sharing in strengthening understanding of the links between climate change, conflict, and social inclusion.

GNWP and its partners facilitated climate-security workshops that brought together women leaders, youth representatives, civil society organizations, and local stakeholders to examine how climate change affects community security and peacebuilding efforts. These workshops created structured spaces for participants to exchange experiences, analyze local challenges, and develop collective responses — with women and youth engaged not only as beneficiaries but as active contributors to the process.

Partners reported a range of concrete impacts. In Nigeria, the Women’s Midlife Support Initiative (WMSI) described how capacity building for women on early warning systems strengthened community preparedness in areas affected by farmer-herder violence:

“Capacity building for women on early warning has helped a lot in the crisis-prone communities. It enabled women to know some red flags and be able to get out of the community, not allowing the herders to take them unaware as it used to be.”

**-Women’s Midlife Support Initiative,
Nigeria**

Similarly, Benue Agro-Climatic Resilience in Semi-Arid Landscapes (ACReSAL)’s climate-smart agriculture training for women and youth improved crop yields, reduced production costs, and helped reduce tensions related to land and resource use. By directly addressing the resource competition that fuels farmer-herder conflict in Nigeria’s Middle Belt, the initiative demonstrates how climate adaptation activities can simultaneously support livelihoods, resilience, and peacebuilding objectives.

These examples reflect broader patterns across the survey. Nearly half of all partner organizations (48 per cent, 13/27) described specific examples centered on capacity building and training, and over half (52 per cent, 14/27) described examples in which women and youth were actively participating in climate and peacebuilding activities — not as passive recipients, but as leaders, decision-makers, and community agents. A further 30 per cent (8/27) provided examples of community-embedded practice, illustrating how workshop-based learning translated into sustained local action. That one in three partners (33 per cent, 9/27) also cited ignorance of the climate-conflict link as a key barrier to integration underscores why structured capacity-building work of this kind remains a critical entry point.

The workshops also served as a foundation for developing Community Climate Response Strategies. These locally driven strategies enable communities to identify climate-related risks, assess their implications for peace and

security, and develop practical measures to strengthen resilience and preparedness. Crucially, they embed the participatory approach of the workshops themselves: women and youth are involved in identifying risks, designing responses, and monitoring outcomes — ensuring that strategies reflect the realities of those most affected.

These findings reinforce a central theme of this report: climate change is not only an environmental challenge but also a peace and security issue. By helping communities understand and respond to the connections between climate stress, resource competition, displacement, and social cohesion, climate-security workshops provide a practical mechanism to address the vulnerabilities identified in Section 3 while supporting the policy integration called for in Section 4.



5.4 Case Study: From Challenges to Institutional Change in the Democratic Republic of Congo

CEFIDE's work demonstrates how locally led, gender-responsive climate initiatives can translate community advocacy into institutional change.

Despite several challenges and barriers identified by the partners, many activities led to long-lasting change and worked towards the implementation of more intersectional and sustainable innovations in communities. The climate-focused initiatives of Centre Féminin de Formation et d'information pour le Développement (CEFIDE**), in the DRC, are a good example.

Working primarily in the province of Kasai Oriental of the DRC, CEFIDE operates at the intersection of peacebuilding and gender equality. In this region, women are highly impacted by climate change, as women form the majority of the agricultural workforce and face combined vulnerabilities. Faced with irregular rainfall, crop destruction, and a lack of space and involvement for women in climate response policy bodies, CEFIDE has observed high levels of individual involvement/effort but even greater structural barriers. Grading the integration and implementation score of climate action sensitive to WPS and YPS, the organization self-assessed a score of 2 out of 5. Expanding on this answer, it was once again highlighted that such a score was not representative of the efforts and the positive impact of the activities on communities, but rather the result of slow and irregular support from local political and legislative bodies, as well as a glaring lack of funding.

The most tangible result achieved by CEFIDE has been the transformation of grassroots climate advocacy and initiatives into formal

institutional change. More specifically, their sustained advocacy efforts led to a provincial decree establishing a United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 Local Steering Committee and inscribing its implementation as a priority in the broader development plan. This achievement enables CEFIDE to monitor and develop additional thematic activities and projects focused on climate action and response to climate change. In a country with very little space for women in policymaking and decision-making, this is an important milestone that frames gender-responsive climate action through a formal mandate. According to its members, CEFIDE's success is largely explained by their understanding that advocacy cannot be confrontational and is most successful when it is collaborative, sometimes even with the bodies that formally exclude women. CEFIDE members underscore the need to build mutual trust with decision-makers at the local, provincial, and national levels. Today, the provincial government of their province includes only 2 women out of the 10 ministers: this is precisely what reinforces CEFIDE's collaborative advocacy at the table. The main advocacy axes revolve around establishing new awareness-raising activities, community tree-planting days, greater support for women's and youth economic initiatives, educating men and boys on gender-sensitive issues, increasing women's representation in institutional bodies, and adopting agricultural techniques adapted to climate change.

CEFIDE's second high-impact approach was to implement activities centered on sharing personal experiences rather than

** Translates to: Women's Center for Training and Inform the positive impact of the activities on communities, but rather the result of slow development on Devthe positive impact of the activities on communities, but rather the result of slow development

simply delivering information. Through lived experiences of climate change and by listening to their peers, women were able to understand its processes and long-term consequences. CEFIDE shared that even women who had not previously been informed on these topics were able to directly connect this new knowledge to what they experienced every day: shifts in rainfall, new heat patterns, the difficulty of irrigating without public infrastructure, etc. Once the concepts were anchored in reality, participants readily opened up, sharing knowledge and experiences with one another, triggering a chain reaction of empowerment and concrete knowledge sharing. This ripple effect is becoming increasingly structural, notably through the creation of a Forest Investment Project with the World Bank. This project is a tangible outcome of the peer-sharing workshops, transforming women into project leaders rather than mere beneficiaries of climate knowledge. Eventually, CEFIDE aims to secure at least one woman on every local development sub-committee across the 145 rural territories of the DRC. The goal is clear: now that women have grounded their knowledge in their own realities and shared their individual experiences, they should take on governing roles in climate action.

Even as the organization faces financial and structural barriers, CEFIDE has been incredibly innovative, mobilizing communities to create their own action plans when resources and support are lacking. Currently, CEFIDE strives to expand climate education and exchanges beyond its current reach to include those who are in the most rural places. The biggest challenge, however, remains extremely limited and costly radio broadcast slots (30 seconds to 1 minute). Nonetheless, CEFIDE aims to expand

mobile and ambulatory outreach in markets and neighborhoods during the evenings, when women's audiences are largest. It is precisely this adaptive, community-centered, and innovative logic that allows CEFIDE to bypass formal channels and cost limitations while still working hand in hand with those in power.

CEFIDE's experiences are transferable based on three principles:

- 1) Anchor advocacy in lived experiences and local knowledge.
- 2) Build mutual trust with authorities — advocacy does not have to be confrontational but rather collaborative.
- 3) Adapt activities and outreach to where women actually are — and to their roles and needs — not to where and what they are assumed to be.

Key takeaway: Together, these experiences demonstrate that locally-led, gender-responsive climate initiatives can achieve institutional change even in resource-constrained settings, provided they are grounded in community ownership and sustained engagement with decision-makers.



Recommendations & Practical Templates for Policymakers and Practitioners

Building on the findings presented in the previous section, the participatory research identified several practical approaches that partners consistently describe as effective in strengthening the integration of climate action with the WPS and YPS agendas. The examples below provide practical templates that policymakers, practitioners, and civil society organizations can adapt to their own contexts.

People-centered approaches are seen as the most promising and effective practices. In particular, the most cited are women and youth participation (52 per cent), capacity building and training (48 per cent), and community-embedded practices (30 per cent). Respectively, these practices refer to:

People-centered approaches	Examples from partners
Women and youth participation Activities where women and youth were actively involved in climate, peacebuilding, or decision-making	<i>“Women and youth were involved in local meetings on environmental projects with municipality and civil society organisations, which strengthened their participation in decision-making and improved the effectiveness of initiatives.”</i> - Local CSO, Lebanon
Capacity building and training Activities which increased skills, knowledge, and implementation ability through capacity-building and/or training	<i>“The trauma of being displaced was downplayed, and capacity building was carried out to restore hope and a sense of belonging to the vulnerable to rekindle their drive for economic prosperity.”</i> - Local CSO, Nigeria
Community-embedded practices Activities embedded in local communities, schools, and/or local institutions	<i>“The community-based work carried out was effective, as evidenced by the emergence of new leaders within the process.”</i> - Jac Quintas de Santa Ana IB Zona II, Colombia

Complementing people-to-people approaches, research participants identified structural approaches that prioritize activities that either create or strengthen lasting institutional and ecological structures as promising practices. These approaches aim to embed the integration of WPS and YPS within durable frameworks rather than individual actions. Examples of these structural approaches include local action planning and localization, community-based early warning and preparedness, and institutional coordination with local authorities. The table below provides examples from partner responses.

Structural approach	Examples from partner responses
Local action planning and localization Activities to draft, validate, implement, or monitor local action plans and community strategies that integrate WPS, YPS, and climate action.	<i>"Bringing together women, youth and community members to develop action plans for implementation."</i> - Local CSO, Nigeria
Community-based early warning and preparedness Activities that develop and operationalize community-led early warning, preparedness and risk reduction mechanisms in conflict and crisis-affected communities.	<i>"Capacity building for women on early warning has helped a lot in the crisis-prone communities. Yes, it enabled women to know some red flags and be able to get out of the community and not allow the herders to take them unawares as it used to be"</i> - Local CSO, Nigeria
Institutional coordination and local governance mechanisms Activities that establish or strengthen local committees of WPS, YPS, and climate-related priorities.	<i>"Since my organization is a member of the local committee for R13/25 and 22/50, we worked toward the signing of the provincial decree establishing this committee."</i> - Local CSO, DRC

Based on these effective practices and considering each respondent's unique experiences and contexts, various recommendations were proposed to better integrate the WPS and YPS agendas into climate action. The recommendations revolve around two main themes:

- 1) "Rights, Resources & Governance" recommendations, which target systemic and institutional reforms around increased promotion of human rights, participation of women and youth in decision-making, better distribution of resources, and stronger governance;
- 2) "Local Implementation" recommendations, which focus on ensuring that results are delivered locally by transforming these

institutional commitments into concrete local actions.

The first type of recommendation was overwhelmingly referred to, with 93 per cent of respondents mentioning it, while the second one was mentioned by 41 per cent.

6.1 Recommendations on Rights, Resources & Governance

Within the "Rights, Resources & Governance" type, the most frequent recommendations in order of the research respondents' priority were the following:

- a. Increase Direct and Flexible Funding for Local Organizations.** The most frequently cited recommendation (37 per cent) among respondents was the need for more direct, flexible, and accessible funding for local organizations and community-led initiatives. Partners mentioned that local actors are often best positioned to identify climate-related risks and implement context-specific responses, yet they frequently face barriers in accessing funding. Respondents highlighted the importance of small grants, simplified application procedures, and longer-term funding mechanisms that allow local organizations to respond quickly to emerging climate and conflict-related challenges. A partner from Lebanon noted that local committees require direct, flexible financial support to implement climate initiatives and conflict-prevention activities that respond to community needs.
- b. Strengthen Protection from Climate-Related Violence.** Cited in 33 per cent of answers, this recommendation refers to more extensive and reactive approaches to protecting women, youth, environmental leaders, or affected groups from climate-related violence or insecurity.
- c. Stronger laws, national plans, regulations, enforcement, or accountability mechanisms.** 26 per cent of respondents' answers mentioned the gap between policy commitments and the reality on the ground. In short, partners are calling for stronger legislation, better enforcement, protection of rights defenders, and meaningful accountability from governments and private actors.
- d. More women and youth in decision-making.** In 22 per cent of the cases, partners included the need for increased

and strengthened participation of women and youth at the negotiation table, policy design, policy implementation, and decision-making as a key recommendation.

- e. Increased corporate and environmental accountability.** In this case, 22 per cent of responses identified the need to build and strengthen a better framework for private sector accountability as a priority. One organization in Lebanon underscored that the private sector causes significant harm without accountability and demanded that this harm stop and that stronger accountability mechanisms be established. Responses identified action points such as monitoring, penalties, compensation, and mandatory assessments.

6.2 Recommendations on Local Implementation

Within the “Local Implementation” theme, respondents emphasized the need to translate institutional commitments into concrete, community-level action. The most frequently cited recommendations were:

- a. Strengthen partnerships with municipalities and local authorities.** Cited by 15 per cent of respondents, this recommendation underscores the importance of stronger collaboration between local organizations, municipalities, local authorities, and community networks. Respondents emphasized that local institutions are often closest to environmental and climate-related challenges and should be meaningfully engaged in designing and implementing responses.
- b. Develop and strengthen local action plans and community systems.** Also

cited by 15 percent of the participants, this recommendation emphasizes the need to support local action plans, community-based systems, and local committees to carry forward WPS, YPS, and climate-related work. A respondent from the DRC called for continued support to activities linked to Resolutions 1325 and 2250, as well as to committees established at the local level.

- c. Support integrated climate, peace, and gender programming.** Cited by 7 per cent of respondents, this recommendation calls for climate action, gender equality, peacebuilding, and youth participation to be addressed together rather than through separate programming streams. Respondents highlighted the importance of designing initiatives that simultaneously address climate risks, protection concerns, livelihoods, and community resilience.
- d. Invest in long-term capacity building and training.** Cited by 7 per cent of respondents, this recommendation emphasizes the need for sustained training and technical support for local actors, civil society, women, youth,

and media. Respondents noted that longer-term capacity strengthening can help communities better understand and respond to the links between climate change, conflict, gender, and peacebuilding.

- e. Strengthen awareness raising and information sharing.** Also cited by 7 per cent of respondents, this recommendation focuses on improving public awareness, communication, and access to information on climate change and its links to peace and security. Respondents pointed to the need to engage broader communities and use accessible communication channels, including media.
- f. Support environmental restoration and community-based climate action.** Cited by 4 per cent of respondents, this recommendation includes actions such as reforestation, tree replacement, and ecosystem restoration. While less frequently mentioned, it reflects the importance of linking environmental protection with local resilience and community-led climate responses.



Together, these recommendations deliver a consistent and precise message: **the implementation of intersectional climate actions aligned with the WPS and YPS agendas requires both structural reforms and locally-driven delivery.** However, the noticeable gap between the recurrence of recommendations targeting “Rights, Resources and Governance” (93 per cent) and “Local implementation” (41 per cent) clearly suggests that organizations’ first barriers remain political and institutional. Beyond feeling let down by the existing legislative and institutional framework, participants are calling for a stronger accountability system and greater inclusion of marginalized people in decision-making bodies. Overall, the answer converges on one idea: while institutional mechanisms remain key for

better implementation, these systems cannot propose viable solutions and create meaningful reforms without including those who are most affected by climate change, conflicts, sexual violence, and any type of discrimination.

Based on the responses, key priorities were identified for conducting activities to integrate WPS and YPS into climate actions. Whether workshops target capacity-building, training, economic empowerment, or awareness raising, partner organizations all highlight the need for more flexible, direct funding and activities that ensure the participation and protection of local communities, especially women and girls. Here is a guide for key principles to keep in mind: the dos and the don’ts.

Do’s	Dont’s
Create programs that integrate gender, youth, and climate justice components from the start. These elements should be there by default, and their intersecting dynamics should be recognized as early as in the design process.	Don’t design programs in silos. Climate change, gender, and youth should be tackled as a single intersectional issue.
Provide more flexible funding, to support multi-year programs and more intersectional projects.	Don’t design activities based on top-down approaches. Community and local knowledge are extremely valuable and will truly reflect communities’ reality and needs.
Include and facilitate local ownership of the programs, not just the individual activities.	Don’t assume participants’ knowledge of WPS, YPS, or climate change. Dissemination and localization should be integrated into every stage of every initiative
Incentivize participation through economic benefits, especially for the youth and in areas with high unemployment.	Don’t dismiss the importance of creating contextually-embedded programmes. Always aim to adapt activity designs to the community’s existing social and economic contexts.
Aim to create sustainable multi-year programs to ensure their integration into communities’ futures.	Don’t ignore the centrality of protection mechanisms in programming; they are not a separate workstream (especially related to funding).



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