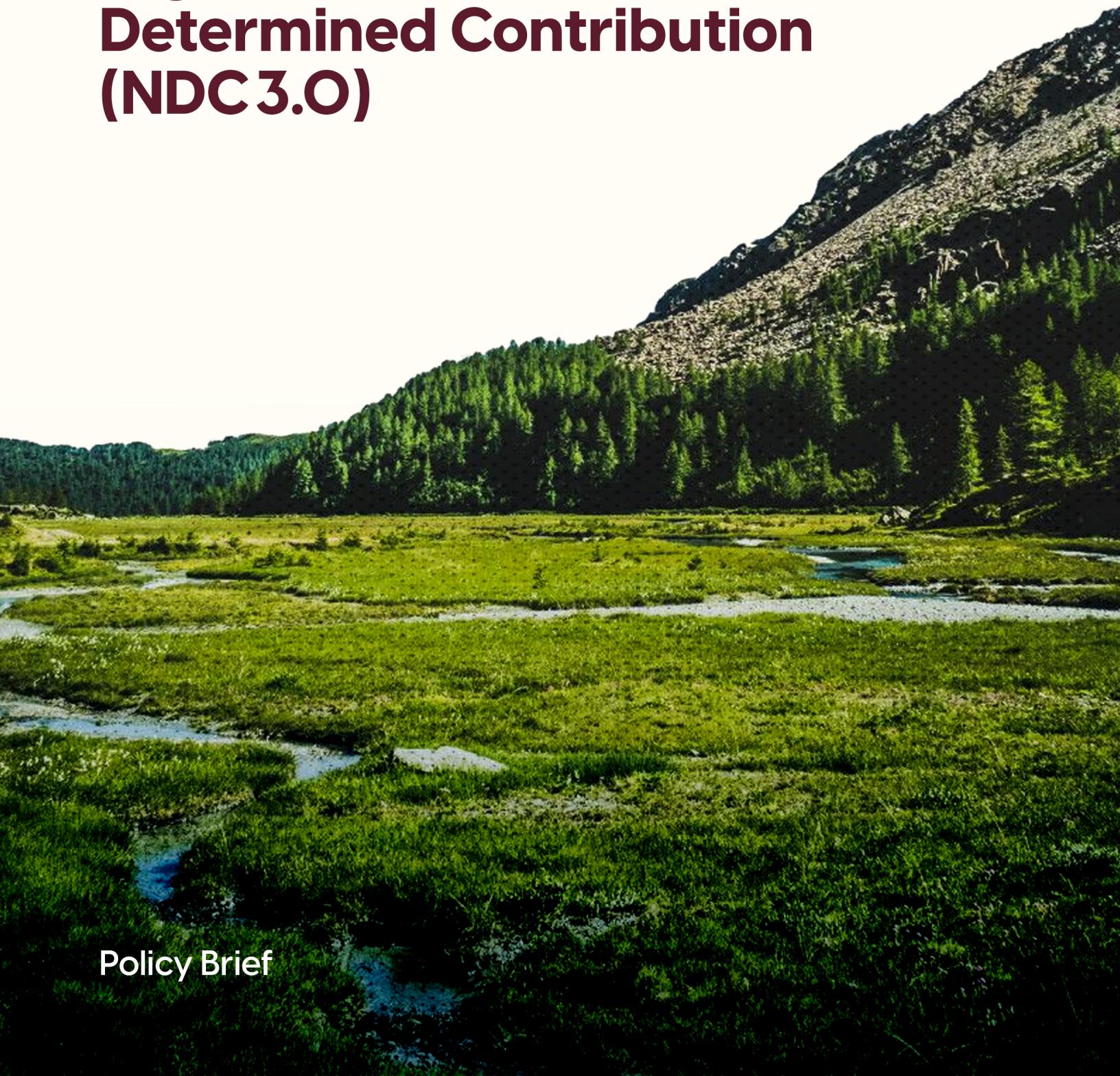


Advancing Inclusion in Nigeria's Third Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC 3.0)





Background and Context

Nigeria's Third Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC 3.0) is the latest iteration of Nigeria's national climate commitment under the Paris Agreement, submitted on September 22, 2025. Key targets include:

- | A planned reduction of absolute emissions by 29 % in 2030 and 32 % in 2035 compared to the 2018 baseline.
- | Continued alignment with Nigeria's long-term low-emission development strategy (LT-LEDS) and net-zero by 2060 ambition.

This update comes amid growing recognition that climate action must be inclusive—embracing gender, youth, persons with disabilities (PWDs), local communities, and sub-national levels of governance—to be effective, equitable and durable.



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Why Inclusion Matters in Nigeria's NDC 3.0

A. Vulnerability and Equity

Nigeria is both highly vulnerable to climate change impacts and home to large populations of youth, women, people living in poverty, and marginalized communities. Owing to climate-related risks and disasters, such as extreme heat, drought, desertification, flooding, and sea level rise, as well as conflicts, populations across the country —from northern Nigeria to southern communities —experience these impacts in various dimensions, including damage to property, health risks, and loss of life. Climate Risk Assessments placed Nigeria among the ten most vulnerable countries to the impacts of climate change. Inclusive climate policies minimise these risks, increase the chances of “leaving no one behind”, align with the Sustainable Development Goals (especially SDG 5, 10, 13), and strengthen social legitimacy of the NDC.

B. Effectiveness and Implementation

Inclusive stakeholder engagement enhances design and implementation. For example, young people in Nigeria have publicly demanded institutionalised inclusion in the NDC 3.0 process, noting that youth make up over 60% of the population. (Vanguard News). When policies reflect lived realities across socio-economic groups and geographies, delivery is more robust.

C. Access to Finance and Monitoring

Finance flows (domestic and international) increasingly require transparency, equity and beneficiary participation. An inclusive approach helps unlock climate finance by signalling good governance, legitimacy and stakeholder accountability. For instance, the European Union has underscored inclusive governance and strong MRV (monitoring, reporting, verification) systems in its partnership with Nigeria. (The Guardian Nigeria)



Current Status of Inclusion in NDC 3.0

Positive indicators:

- During Nigeria's validation of NDC 3.0, government authorities stressed that climate action is not the responsibility of the government alone. It demands the active participation of all stakeholders—from ministries and agencies, to civil society, private sector, development partners, youth groups, women's organisations, and academic and research institutions. (News Agency of Nigeria)
- The development of NDC 3.0 was more inclusive than previous versions, encouraging written contributions from a broader range of stakeholders.
- In the NDC 3.0 revision process, gender equality and social inclusion have been explicitly mentioned and mainstreamed. For example, UN Women is calling for a national consultant on gender equality and social inclusion across NDC sectors.
- The document broadens sector coverage (waste, water, short-lived climate pollutants) and improves the data baseline, which provides opportunities for more tailored inclusion of marginal groups. (UNFCCC)
- The NDC 3.0 recognises the significance of oil and gas in Nigeria's energy transition journey and the additional burden on oil-producing regions. It also highlights the need to address the potential socio-economic implications of the energy transition, such as skills training to mitigate unemployment and economic development through the expansion of the non-oil economy and the development of clean energy.

Gaps and Challenges

- While the process is more inclusive than before, concrete mechanisms for institutionalising the participation of youth, women, PWDs, and sub-national/local communities are still emerging.
- Data Disaggregation: The NDC 3.0 document has improved baseline data, but specific metrics on inclusion (For example, gender-differentiated impacts, PWD-sensitive measures) are not yet fully operationalised.
- Finance and Resources: Ensuring that inclusive actions (community-based, youth-led, women-led) get ring-fenced funding remains a key practical issue.
- Sub-national and Local Governance Linkages: Nigeria's federal system means state governments, local governments, and community actors need empowerment and capacity to engage in NDC implementation; the institutional alignment remains a work in progress.
- Commendably, the NDC 3.0 includes provisions to address short-lived climate pollutants (SLCPs), including phasing out routine flaring and reducing fugitive emissions in the oil and gas industry. However, it is relatively silent on measures to address environmental degradation in oil and gas host communities as part of the transition process. This is important to ensure that impacted communities are not left behind.

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Policy Recommendations for Strengthening Inclusion

Recommendation 1: Stakeholder and Community Engagement

Institutionalise Multi-Stakeholder Governance Platforms

- | Mandate regular consultations (state-level, community-level) tied to each sectoral component of NDC 3.0 (For example, agriculture/forestry, waste, energy) and integrate feedback loops into the MRV framework.
- | Establish and resource inclusive stakeholder reference groups under the National Council on Climate Change (NCCC) with dedicated representation for youth, women, PWDs, local government, indigenous/traditional communities, and the private sector.
- | Develop Terms of Reference (ToR) and ensure transparent selection of stakeholder representatives, with capacity-building support for marginalised groups to engage meaningfully.

Recommendation 2: Data and Transparency

Strengthen Data and Monitoring for Inclusive Outcomes

- | Embed gender, youth and disability-sensitive indicators into the NDC 3.0 MRV system—For example, number of women-led climate-mitigation projects, youth-trained persons, PWD-inclusive adaptation interventions.
- | Disaggregate data by gender, age, disability status, region (state/local), and urban/rural to ensure that climate action reaches marginalised populations and that progress can be tracked equitably.
- | Incorporate social-inclusion reviews in periodic progress reports to the UNFCCC and national platforms.

Recommendation 3: Institutional Reform

Ensure Finance, Capacity and Local Ownership

- | Allocate a dedicated “inclusion fund” within the climate finance architecture to support community-based, women-led and youth-led climate actions aligned with NDC 3.0 priorities.
- | Promote the devolution of implementation funds to states and local governments with clear inclusion criteria, and build capacity at the state/local levels for inclusive climate planning, budgeting, and execution.
- | Leverage partnerships with development finance institutions (such as the African Development Bank) and the EU to invest in inclusive climate entrepreneurship (especially youth and women) as part of the implementation pipeline. (Radio Nigeria)

Align NDC Implementation with Wider Development and Inclusion Agendas

- | Link NDC 3.0 implementation with Nigeria's national development frameworks (For example, the national development plan, SDGs, social protection programmes) to ensure that climate policy also advances inclusion, poverty reduction, job creation, and gender equity.
- | Promote just transition frameworks that address the implications of climate mitigation for vulnerable workers, regions dependent on fossil-fuel or traditional energy, and informal economy actors—ensuring that transition benefits are shared inclusively.
- | Support capacity for local communities to engage in planning of adaptation and mitigation interventions—ensuring that local knowledge, Indigenous practices and grassroots priorities inform climate action.
- | It is crucial that the ongoing development of the NDC 3.0 implementation framework (strategy and action plan) be completed promptly. This would facilitate early implementation and help drive interventions, especially adaptation measures targeted at impacted communities across the country.



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Conclusion

Nigeria's NDC 3.0 presents a timely opportunity not only to raise ambition for greenhouse gas reductions and resilience-building, but also to embed inclusion as a core principle of climate governance. A truly inclusive NDC process and implementation pathway will enhance legitimacy, strengthen effectiveness, unlock finance, and ensure that marginalised groups—women, youth, persons with disabilities, rural and indigenous communities—are not left behind.

By implementing the policy recommendations above, Nigeria can ensure that its climate commitments also drive equitable, sustainable development, aligning with global imperatives and national ambitions. The choice is not simply about what emissions are reduced, but who shares in the benefits of that climate action—and who participates in designing and delivering it.



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