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Ghana, NDC Analysis, 2022

Executive Summary

Though Ghana as a developing country contributes little to global greenhouse gas emissions, in both the intended NDC and the updated NDCs, the country has set forth very ambitious emissions reduction targets and other national documents that outline policies to cut emissions from all sectors. With the updated NDCs, Ghana aims to implement 34 mitigation measures to achieve absolute emission reductions of 64 MtCO_{2e} by 2030.

Highlights

- Ghana requires between US\$ 9.3 and US\$ 15.5 billion of investment to implement the 47 nationally determined contribution measures from 2020 to 2030.
- The country's economic capabilities do not reflect its ability to achieve the highest possible emissions reduction ambition as contained in the NDCs.
- Gender, women, and vulnerable institutions or groups were involved in the processes leading to the update of the NDCs with lessons from the INDCs.
- The implementation of the policy actions in the NDCs will cumulatively benefit nearly 38 million people, with the majority being women and youth as well as foster social inclusion and climate justice.
- Ghana hopes to strengthen the involvement of civil society organizations and traditional authorities to mobilize public support and ensure the flow of information from the national to the community levels and vice versa.

Recommendations for Improvements

- Illegal mining activities are destroying the water resources of the country that threatens future generations, and ambitious policies on tackling such issues should be included in the next NDCs.
- The NDCs should have multi-partisan support and involvement to avoid its abrogation in events of change of government.
- Young people should be prioritized, and engaged more in the processes leading to updating the NDC since they are the majority and would drive the other sectors of the NDCs implementation.
- Intergenerational equity and justice for young and future generations can be prioritized more in the NDC by creating the enabling platform for continuous consultation and involvement of young people
- Creation of a legal framework that compels successive governments to stick to the NDC pledges and complete actions that were commenced by previous government.
- Future NDCs need to involve the youth and gender in climate decision making spaces, to address access to water, energy and food issues.

Quick Links

- [Ghana Intended NDC](#) (September 2016)
- [Ghana Updated NDC](#) (November 2021)

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1. Introduction

Ghana became a Party to the UNFCCC in September 1995 and ratified the Paris Agreement in September 2016. Article 4 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) requires that countries prepare and submit their Nationally Determined Contributions. Ghana submitted its first Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) in September 2016. The INDC of Ghana primarily focused on mitigation and adaptation actions to help attain low carbon climate resilience through effective adaptation and greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction in sectors; of climate-proof infrastructure, equitable social development, sustainable mass transportation, sustainable energy security, sustainable forest management, and alternative urban waste management. Ghana's emission reduction goal under the INDC is to unconditionally lower its GHG emissions by 15 percent relative to a business-as-usual (BAU) scenario emission of 73.95MtCO_{2e} by 2030. An additional 30 percent emission reduction is attainable on condition that external support is made available to Ghana to cover the full cost of implementing the mitigation action (finance, technology transfer, capacity building). With this external support, a total emission reduction of 45% below the BUA emission levels can be achieved by 2030.

Climate change is causing severe damage to the infrastructure sector in Ghana, threatening vulnerable coastal communities and saline intrusion in coastal waterways and groundwater reservoirs.

To achieve the NDCs pledges and inclusivity, multi-stakeholder involvement is a necessary comprehensive systematic approach. On a multi-stakeholder approach, women and youth should not just be mentioned as vulnerable groups in NDCs but rather be enhanced in their active roles and meaningful engagements in climate action, which is crucial to accelerate climate action. By analyzing Ghana's NDC, the author aims to focus on emissions, gender, youth, Climate justice/social inclusion and loss and damage issues from the feminist and gender perspectives.

2. Country Context

Ghana, located in West Africa, has a total land area of 239,460 km². Ghana is a democratic nation with power shared among the Executive, Legislature, and Judiciary. Ghana's climate is tropical and strongly influenced by the West Africa monsoon winds. The climate is generally warm, with variable temperatures masked by seasons and topography. The northern part of the country typically records one rainy season, which begins in May and lasts until September. Southern Ghana records two rainy seasons from April to July and from September to November. The different rainfall patterns present different climate change vulnerabilities to the northern and southern divides of the country. Ghana's 2020 population is estimated at 30.9 million and represents a 26% increase over 2010 levels of 24.6 million at an annual growth rate of 2.3%. Under a tenth (8.2%) of the population live in extreme poverty, outstandingly high in rural Savannah at 36.1%. Poverty and livelihoods, gender, and geographic locations determine the level of climate change vulnerabilities in the country. In the last 30 years, the economy expanded more than four times, consequently halving poverty to 23% by 2016. Ghana's sustained economic growth has been influenced by the inflows of proceeds from commodity exports (gold, cocoa, timber, and recently crude oil). In 2019, out of the US\$22 billion international trade value, gold accounted for 50%, followed by crude oil (22%), cocoa (11%), and other commodities (17%). On the other hand, the

cost of environmental degradation was valued at approximately US\$ 6.3 billion (World Bank, 2020). Much of the rural livelihoods depend on a natural resource base. Statistics show that 71% of rural people are employed in agriculture, forestry, and fishing (World Bank, 2020).

The devastating effects of COVID-19 made the economy grow by only 1.1% in 2020, a 6.5% shortfall before the pandemic. Besides COVID-19, Ghana is saddled with development challenges associated with high employment, urbanization, and illegal mining. Climate change presents an additional long-term development risk that Ghana is addressing in the tight fiscal constraints. Despite the economic challenges, climate change remains a priority in Ghana. That is why its recent national development policy outlines climate change as a priority area for action. The commitment to tackle climate on all fronts has been shown in this nationally determined contribution's high ambition climate actions.

3. NDC overview

Ghana requires between US\$ 9.3 and US\$ 15.5 billion of investment to implement the 47 nationally determined contribution measures from 2020 to 2030. US\$ 3.9 billion would be required to implement the 16 unconditional programs of action till 2030. The remaining US\$ 5.4 billion for the 31 conditional programs of action would be mobilized from the public, international, and private sector sources and carbon markets. Ghana will need an additional US\$ 3 million biennially to support coordination actions and the regular international reporting of the nationally determined contribution. The analysis looks at Emissions, Gender and Youth as well as Climate Justice/Civil Society Inclusion and Loss and Damages.

3.1 Emissions

According to the updated NDC, Ghana aims to implement 34 mitigation measures to achieve absolute emission reductions of 64 MtCO₂e by 2030. Out of the 34, nine unconditional measures are expected to lead to a 24.6 MtCO₂e emission reduction amount. An additional 25 conditional measures can be implemented to further achieve 39.4 MtCO₂e if financial support from the international and private sectors is made

available to cover the full cost for implementation. The ambitious reduction targets are expected to amount to 88% of emissions in the following sectors: Energy, Industrial Processes and Product Use, LULUCF, and Waste consistent with 2006 IPCC guidelines.

Ghana intends to use voluntary cooperation under Article 6.2 of the Paris Agreement to achieve up to 55% (which is about 24 million tonnes of emission reductions) of its conditional absolute emission reductions. The country requires between US\$ 9.3 and US\$ 15.5 billion of investment to implement the 47 nationally determined contribution measures from 2020 to 2030. In light of the current national circumstances, the country's economic capabilities do not reflect its ability to achieve the highest possible emissions ambition as contained in the NDCs.

The updated NDC, though very ambitious, the country is faced with an economic crisis as a result of COVID-19 and the impact of climate change is affecting its major export cash-crop (Cocoa). This results in low-income levels and other urgent economic responsibilities that will affect its commitment to emissions reduction unless by international support. According to the World Bank, the GDP growth of Ghana is expected to slow to 3.5 percent in 2022 and an average of 3.3 percent over 2022-2024 as macroeconomic instability and corrective policy measures depress aggregate demand which further retards the country's ability to deliver its NDC pledges.

3.2 Gender

The INDCs of Ghana were gender sensitive and focused on vulnerable gender-related actions like building resilience for such groups on technology and capacity which benefited men, boys, girls, and women.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) under Ghana's Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology, and Innovation (MESTI) is responsible for managing the gender component of the NDC Support Programme in coordination with the Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection. The Ministry of Gender, Children & Social Protection (MoGCSP) in Ghana on the other hand coordinates and tracks progress on

all climate change and gender-related initiatives related to the NDCs. It is also mandated to operationalize a gender and climate change subcommittee under the National Climate Change Steering Committee. The subcommittee facilitate the integration of Gender into the NDC planning process, Ghana conducted gender analysis on its Agriculture and Energy sectors with the view of understanding how these sectors are gender-responsive regarding the NDCs actions that were submitted from these sectors. Gender and women institutions or groups were involved in the processes leading to the updated NDCs with lessons from the INDCs.

The NDC prioritizes gender justice and equity by seeking to;

- Institutionalize capacity building on gender and climate change towards NDC planning and implementation.
- Include or engage gender and vulnerable groups in the consultation processes leading to the update of the NDC.
- Increase women's access to climate information including climate-smart practices and technologies.
- Build resilience and promote livelihood opportunities for the women in climate-vulnerable Agriculture landscapes and food systems.
- Promote sustainable charcoal production, including youth and women entrepreneurs.

Implementing the policy actions will cumulatively benefit nearly 38 million people, with the majority being the women and as well foster social inclusion of women.

That notwithstanding, a bill is before the parliament of Ghana that when passed into law, will criminalize the activities of vulnerable groups including the LGBTQ+ society. Such a law will deprive the community and other minority groups in the country of the justice needed in the exercise of their rights and freedom as well as involvement in the NDC processes.

3.3 Youth

According to the updated NDC 2021, the needs of young people and youth have to some extent been captured. Not only are they mentioned, but involved in the planning and updating of the NDCs. Current economic crises coupled with climate change impacts are being faced by the youth. The NDC outlined policies including; COVID-19 Alleviation and Revitalisation of Enterprises Support (CARES), a policy in building the economy through safeguarding jobs for young people. It is envisaged that the economic gains from the CARES program would, after 2025, serve as the basis for the government to continue its economic diversification efforts in the face of the transition towards a resilient and low-carbon future. Intergenerational equity and justice for young and future generations can be prioritized more in the NDC by creating the enabling platform for continuous consultation and involvement of young people. Though the NDC mentions youth and some policies to ensure their inclusivity and needs, it does not state how the most vulnerable youth should be reached out to. In practice, the youth who live in deprived communities far from the capital cities are left out of the intergenerational equity, justice, and consultation process. Implementing the policy actions here in the updated NDC, it will cumulatively benefit nearly 38 million people, with the majority being the youth and as will foster social inclusion for the youth. This will address the country's needs and responsibilities in providing economic stability to young people in the face of economic crises.

3.4 Climate Justice/Civil Society Inclusion

The NDC of Ghana was updated on the back of climate justice, equity, and civil society inclusion. It seeks to strengthen the mobilization of public and private grassroots participation in both processes leading to the update of the NDCs and the implementation of NDC targets.

The NDC was updated with marginalized voices in mind, the government of Ghana is developing an accelerated path for achieving a resilient and low-carbon society by promoting economic growth, climate protection, air quality benefits, youth and women empowerment, and social inclusion in the next decade and beyond.

Furthermore, Ghana hopes to strengthen the involvement of civil society organisations and traditional authorities to mobilise public support and ensure the flow of information from the national to the community levels and vice versa.

The Whole-Ghana-Approach (WoGA) strategy was employed to consult all the relevant stakeholders during the update process to ensure the buy-in of the relevant stakeholders to provide input into NDC updates. More grassroots and vulnerable groups should be involved in the processes.

3.5 Loss and Damages

The updated NDC does not clearly mention Loss and Damages and how the impact of climate change would be cared for in terms of the losses of lives and properties. Africa, including Ghana, has contributed only 3.8 percent to global greenhouse gas emissions yet it is the most vulnerable continent to the impacts of climate change and is already suffering severe loss and damage.

As a developing country, leaders, activists and stakeholders have highlighted the historic responsibility of developed countries in causing climate change and have called on them to provide compensation or make up loss and damage funds to vulnerable countries. Ghana, however, has a National Disaster Management Organization (NADMO) that provides emergency relief items to victims of loss and damages.

As part of loss and damage policies, Ghana will ensure social inclusion / early warning and disaster risk management, while providing smart and safe communities to reduce floods and other climate induced disasters. Next NDC should include ambitious actions towards loss and damages.

4. Conclusion and recommendations

The analysis presents a couple of opportunities that when the contributions or policies are met, will for the next decade address critical issues as stated in the ambitious NDCs to include; emissions reduction, gender, youth, climate justice/civil society inclusion and loss &

damages. Enhancing gender and youth capacity to effectively engage in the NDC processes as well as their essential roles in tackling adaptation and mitigation.

Although the updated NDCs take emissions, youth, gender, social inclusion and loss & damages into perspective, there are no clear strategies for funding or technical support for youth-led or gender based organizations to be capacitated on the processes involved in updating the NDCs as well as implementation of policy actions thereof. Majority of Ghana's population are young people and therefore very crucial for representation. Though ambitious NDCs, the country's economic outlook will hinder the implementation of actions. From the analysis, the ambitious emission reduction targets stood out. Young people should be prioritized, since they are majority and would drive the other sectors of the NDCs implementation.

Based on the analysis and the current country situation, the author makes the following recommendation for future NDC updates:

- Preserve the practices and knowledge of indigenous and traditional communities, in order to strengthen climate resilience and mainstream their knowledge in widely-circulated research initiatives.
- Promote the involvement of women in national organizations and institutions for the inclusion, planning, updating and implementation of climate policies.
- Promote technical and financial support for women-led best practices, to ensure gender-sensitive and responsive participation.
- More climate finance should be allocated to sustain the involvement of women and youth in climate action.
- Gender equality must be integrated into all climate strategies to better impact long-term mitigation.
- Policies in governing party's manifestoes should not be added to the next NDCs, to avoid its abrogation in events of change of power.
- Actions on illegal mining activities which affect vulnerable young people and women should be addressed in subsequent NDCs.

5. References

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