

## Who Cares About Gender? A Comparative Analysis of Gender Sensitivity in the UNFCCC

Ana Dominguez<sup>1</sup> and Hayley Stevenson<sup>2</sup>

### SUMMARY OF STUDY & PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

#### KEY POINTS

- Female participation in Party delegations is not a predictor of the gender responsiveness of NDCs.
- Developed countries have a higher percentage of women in their delegations, but gender-responsive NDCs are much more common among developing countries than developed countries.<sup>3</sup>
- The relevance of gender equality for climate policy in developed countries is being overlooked.
- Developing countries' higher degree of gender responsiveness may reflect the influence of external support initiatives and a widespread (but mistaken) perception that gender inequality is relevant for developing countries but not developed countries.

The issue of gender has gradually become more salient in the UN climate regime. Two developments are particularly noteworthy. First, there are now procedures to monitor women's participation in delegations and ensure equal participation in UNFCCC bodies and roles. Second, guidelines now encourage Parties to consider gender in their NDCs. Our study aims to understand how these two pillars of the gender equity agenda interact (participation and policy). We hypothesized that Parties that demonstrate ambition on one pillar of the gender equity agenda would also demonstrate ambition on the other. There is no simple causal relationship between inclusion and influence; our hypothesis did not assume that increasing the number of female participants would *lead to* gender-responsive policy. Instead, we assumed that a Party's level of female participation would be indicative of its commitment to gender equality, and that this commitment should also be reflected in policy. Given that existing research reveals a North-South gap in gender representation (developed countries perform better than developing countries),<sup>4</sup> we expected to see this reflected in NDCs. To test these hypotheses, we conducted a mixed-method study combining statistical analysis and qualitative content analysis. We did not find support for either hypothesis. Instead, we found that the two pillars of the gender equality agenda are completely decoupled: Parties with high numbers of female delegates are no more likely to have gender-responsive NDCs than Parties with low levels of

<sup>1</sup> Research Assistant, Universidad Torcuato Di Tella, Argentina [a.dominguez@mail.utdt.edu](mailto:a.dominguez@mail.utdt.edu)

<sup>2</sup> Associate Professor of International Relations, Universidad Torcuato Di Tella, Argentina [hstevenson@utdt.edu](mailto:hstevenson@utdt.edu)

<sup>3</sup> 'Developed countries' refers to countries that are not eligible to receive ODA; 'developing countries' refers to ODA-eligible countries.

<sup>4</sup> DOI: 10.1016/S2542-5196(24)00270-5



participation. While developed countries have a higher percentage of female delegates, gender responsive NDCs are much more common among developing countries than developed countries. There is evidence that Parties that participated in external capacity building initiatives for NDC preparation have particularly high gender responsiveness scores.

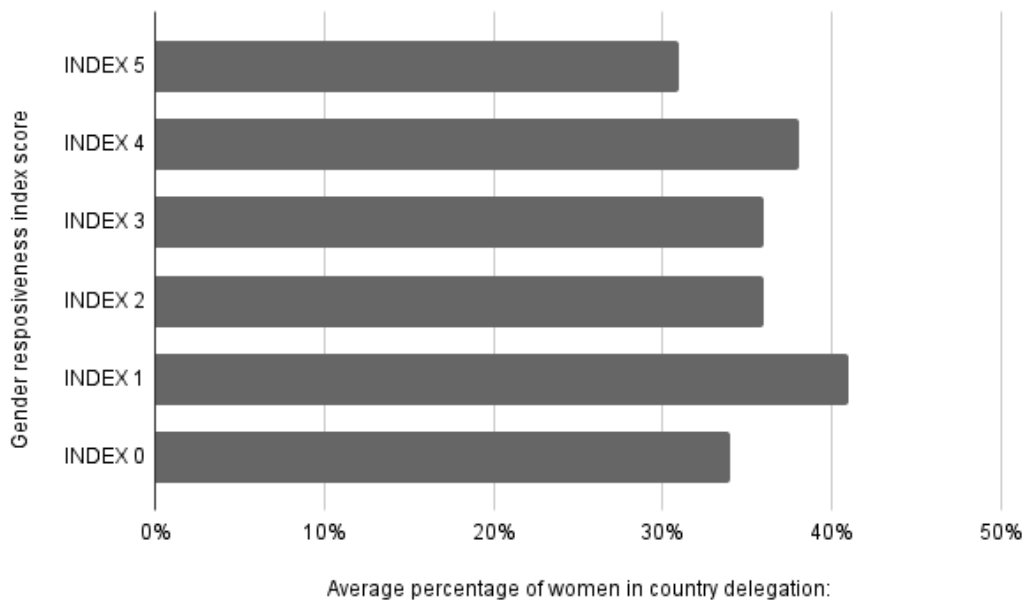


Figure 1: Relationship between gender responsive of NDCs and percentage of female delegates

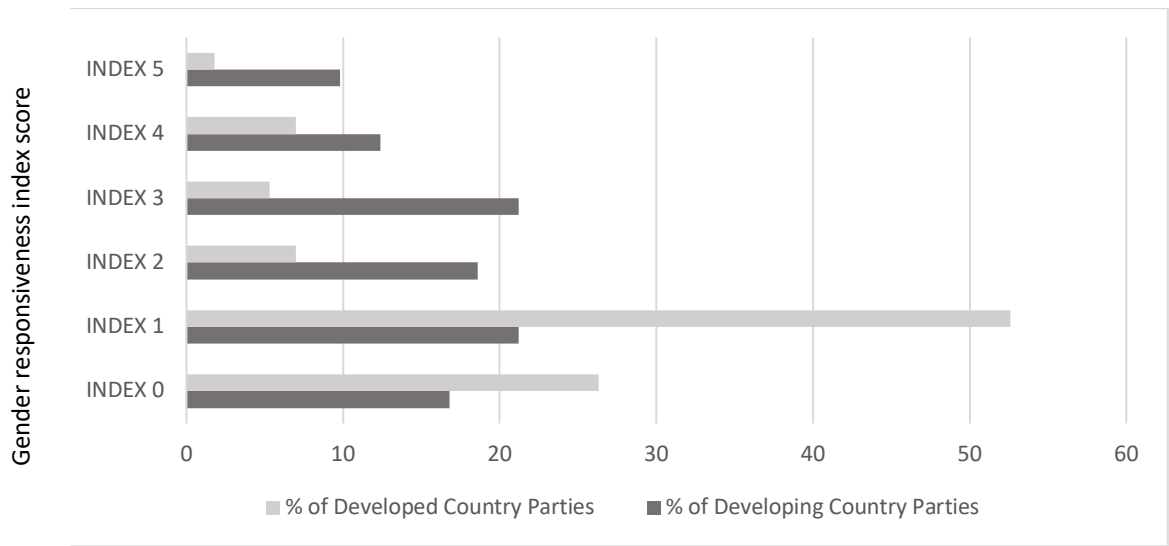


Figure 2: NDC gender responsiveness scores for developing and developed country Parties