

# Building Capacity for Integrated Family Planning/Reproductive Health and Population, Environment and Development (BUILD)

Advancing Integration of Family Planning and Reproductive Health (FP/RH) into Climate Change Policies and Programs in Côte d'Ivoire

| POLICY BRIEF

CÔTE D'IVOIRE • JULY 2024



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## **Disclaimer**

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## Key Messages

The government of Côte d'Ivoire (CIV) developed and is implementing various policies and plans to address health, environment, family planning (FP), reproductive health (RH), and other development issues. However, existing climate change and environment policies and strategies adopted by the government show a lack of interconnectedness with family planning (FP), reproductive health (RH), and gender issues.

Critical climate change sector actors rarely integrate FP/RH, youth, and gender in climate actions. Côte d'Ivoire's (CIV) government and development partners, including international organizations, must refine environmental and climate change policies, plans, and strategies to incorporate FP/RH, youth, and gender.

In the coming years, the development of or revisions to key CIV policies, such as the National Development Plan (2026–2030), National Drought Plan (2021–2025), and National Climate Change Adaptation Plan may serve as opportunities to integrate FP/RH, youth, and gender.

## Introduction

As of 2024, the population of Côte d'Ivoire (CIV) reached 29.6 million by 2024 (UNFPA, 2024b). Gender disparities remain significant, with the country ranked 121<sup>st</sup> out of 146 countries on the Global Gender Gap Index 2024, scoring 0.655 (World Economic Forum, 2024). CIV faces high maternal mortality, adolescent birth rate, and total fertility rates<sup>1</sup>. Additionally, there are significant gaps in access to and utilization of family planning and other reproductive health services.

Agriculture and related activities are the backbone of Côte d'Ivoire's economy, involving about two-thirds of its population of over 26 million as of 2020 (World Bank, 2021). Climate change presents a significant global development challenge with far-reaching consequences, impacting economic growth, health, water availability, and food security. Côte d'Ivoire, like many developing countries, is grappling with the effects of climate change including floods, coastal erosion, and landslides.

By 2050, Côte d'Ivoire is expected to see a 2°C rise in average temperatures, more variable rainfall, and a 30 cm increase in sea levels. Without action, sea levels could rise by up to 1.2 meters in Greater Bassam and Abidjan, causing severe flooding and displacement. The north will face more frequent droughts, and the south will experience increased flooding and unpredictable weather. By 2030, climate change could push an additional 2 to 6 percent of households into extreme poverty, adding 1 million people to the current 6 million living in poverty (World Bank, 2021b pp. 196).

The government of Côte d'Ivoire has developed and is actively implementing various policies, strategies, and plans to guide the country's development efforts and achieve its targets, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The BUILD Project conducted a rapid desk study of national climate change plans, policies, and strategies, identifying gaps and opportunities for integrating population dynamics, FP/RH, maternal and child health (MCH), gender, and youth into climate change policies and plans. This policy brief summarizes the review, highlighting the integration of these elements into Côte d'Ivoire's climate change policies and plans.

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## Key Findings

- **Strategic Plan “Côte d’Ivoire 2030”** aims to elevate Côte d’Ivoire from lower-middle income to upper-middle income status and transition most Ivorians into the upper-middle class by 2030. The plan is structured around six pillars; none of these specifically focus on climate and the environment. However, the social and cultural development pillar prioritizes addressing rapid population growth, access to quality health care and social protection, and promoting gender equality. It also emphasizes prioritizing vulnerable groups including women, young people, persons with disabilities, and the elderly. Although the plan does not explicitly mention the integration of FP/RH and maternal and child health into climate and environmental action, there is an opportunity for integration given their prioritization in the vision.
- The **National Gender and Climate Change Strategy 2020-2024** highlights the gender challenges associated with climate change in Cote d’Ivoire, including the under-representation of women in politics, their heightened vulnerability to climate impacts, and their unequal participation in sectors such as energy, transport, and climate change research. The strategy envisions that by 2030, all climate change initiatives in the country will incorporate gender and social inclusion issues. This strategy is unique in its aim to be the only policy explicitly seeking to systematically integrate gender and youth into climate change action, though it does not address FP/RH.
- The **National Environment and Sustainable Development Policy (NESDP) 2018** lacks a clear statement on how population dynamics impact the environment. More broadly, the NESDP focuses on the political, economic, social, cultural, and ecological aspects without addressing FP/RH, youth, and gender-related issues. This is a missed opportunity to integrate FP/RH, youth, and gender issues into a key national climate policy. This oversight can make mitigation and adaptation efforts less effective and increase the vulnerability of women and youth to climate impacts.
- Through the **Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) 2022**, Côte d’Ivoire aims to reduce the carbon footprint of its development by prioritizing mitigation options with significant “co-benefits”; improve the country’s resilience to climate change; align sector policies and improve implementation mechanisms and tools to meet these goals. The NDCs also focus on mobilizing necessary resources. However, while the NDC addresses women’s empowerment, it does not emphasize the links between population dynamics and FP/RH in the context of climate change.
- The **National Drought Plan (2021–2025)** demonstrates clearly how droughts impact gender, and highlights some examples of difficulties faced by women and other vulnerable populations, such as children, youth, old people, and persons with disabilities. However, FP/RH has not been mentioned in this plan.
- Côte d’Ivoire’s **National Development Plan 2021-2025** is built around six pillars, one of which is dedicated to climate change. The overarching goal of the plan is to elevate the country to upper-middle-income status through economic and social transformation. This comprehensive plan guides development across various sectors and establishes clear targets for health, FP/RH, MCH, gender, youth, and other development issues.
- The **National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan 2020-2030 (NDRRMP)** has not been fully implemented due to weak capacity and lack of coordination. Gender equity is well integrated

into the NDRRMP 2020-2030. Côte d'Ivoire does not consider disaster risk reduction and management as a priority. In the NDRRMP 2020-2030, the government developed a national disaster risk map, outlined existing data collection tools, created a definition of key indicators, and described an early warning system (EWS). The NDRRMP 2020-2030 does not prioritize FP/RH, MCH, and gender even though the term "gender" has been used as a strategic priority for disaster risk reduction and management in the document.

- Côte d'Ivoire does not yet have a National Climate Change Adaptation Plan, but work is underway to develop one with support from the United National Development Program (UNDP). The development of the NAP is a significant step towards enhancing Côte d'Ivoire's resilience to climate change and ensuring sustainable development. It also provides a good entry point to integrate population dynamics, FP/RH, health, gender, and youth issues with clear targets and objectives.

## Implications

Côte d'Ivoire has formulated and implemented several national policies, strategies, frameworks, and plans to address climate change in line with international standards, such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement. Additionally, the country has developed policies, strategies, and plans to guide its development efforts in areas such as FP/RH, gender, and youth development. While some policies focus on gender as stated in the National Gender and Climate Change Strategy (2020–2024), FP/RH and youth often remain missing or absent in most climate change-related policies, plans, and frameworks.

Côte d'Ivoire Vision 2030, included in the National Development Plan (2021–2025), focuses on the environment and specifically, climate change as a main sustainable development pillar that the country strives to meet. It is important to ensure national commitment toward achieving the SDGs by promoting equality and equity based on population dynamics. Better resource allocation to vulnerable populations such as women, youth, and people living in rural areas will improve livelihoods and achieve the SDGs.

Côte d'Ivoire has established a Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development, and Ecologic Transition to preserve the environment, enhance well-being, and promote sustainable development. However, existing policies, plans, and frameworks for climate change action limit the comprehensive integration and interconnectedness between FP/RH, gender, youth, and climate change. Further, there has been limited progress in integrating these policies and strategies into planning, budgeting, implementation, and monitoring processes.

To achieve the SDGs, it is imperative to bridge gaps in climate and development policies, plans, and frameworks by integrating population dynamics, FP/RH, gender, and youth. This requires concerted efforts through resource allocation, research, advocacy, and inclusive engagement of key stakeholders including women, youth, and other vulnerable groups.

## Recommendations

- The government of Côte d'Ivoire should **reinforce its political commitment** to mainstream FP/RH, Maternal and Child Health (MCH), and gender equity in large-scale climate adaptation efforts. This can be achieved by integrating these priorities into national climate policies and strategies, fostering cross-sector collaboration, building capacity among policymakers, and community leaders, engaging local communities, investing in data and research, allocating sufficient funding and resources, and establishing robust monitoring and evaluation systems.

- **Strengthen coordination among key actors and stakeholders** to address the interconnection between population dynamics, health, development, agriculture, environment, natural resources management, and climate action across national and local programs. This coordination will be enhanced through high-level meetings among key ministries to explore opportunities for integrating FP/RH, gender, and youth into climate change-related policies and plans.
- The government, CSOs, and development partners must **generate and disseminate evidence** to document the impact of the integration of population dynamics, health, and FP/RH into the climate change space to inform policy decisions. This ensures that policies, and plans in Cote d'Ivoire are grounded in evidence by investing in a robust data management system that collects, analyses, and shares data with decision-makers to improve policies, strategies, and plans.
- **Strengthen the implementation of the National Gender and Climate Change Strategy** to fully achieve its objective of mainstreaming gender issues into climate action, with a focus on addressing the economic empowerment of women and youth. The National Gender and Climate Change Network, established in 2020 by the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, needs to be fully functional and operational by establishing clear guidance for assessing the implementation of the strategy.
- **Strengthen the capacity** of policymakers, media stakeholders, private sectors, and community and religious actors to understand the importance of integrating population dynamics, FP/RH, youth, and gender into climate action. This capacity will be enhanced through specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) advocacy training, supporting the development and use of knowledge products, and tools to facilitate policy dialogue that enables such integration.
- CSOs, youth and women groups, and development partners should **leverage the review and revision of upcoming climate change policies and strategies** to integrate FP/RH, youth, and gender issues. A key upcoming opportunity is the National Climate Change Adaptation Plan that is currently being developed.

## Annexes

### A) Policies, Strategies and Plans Reviewed

<b>Policies and plans</b>
Strategic Plan "Côte d'Ivoire 2030"
National Gender and Climate Change Strategy 2020-2024
National Environment and Sustainable Development Policy 2018
Nationally Determined Contributions 2022
National Drought Plan 2021-2025
National Development Plan 2021-2025
National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan 2020-2030

## B) Abbreviations

<b>AFIDEP</b>	African Institute for Development Policy
<b>BUILD</b>	Building Capacity for Integrated Family Planning, Reproductive Health and Population, Environment, and Development (PED) Action Project
<b>CIV</b>	Cote d'Ivoire
<b>CSOs</b>	Civil Society Organizations
<b>FHI 360</b>	Family Health International
<b>FP</b>	Family Planning
<b>LEAD</b>	Leadership for Environment and Development
<b>NESDP</b>	National Environment and Sustainable Development Policy
<b>NDCs</b>	Nationally Determined Contributions
<b>NDRRMP</b>	National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan
<b>PACJA</b>	Pan African Climate Justice Alliance
<b>PED</b>	Population, Environment, and Development
<b>PFPI</b>	PATH Foundation Philippines, Inc.
<b>PHED</b>	Population, Health, Environment and Development
<b>RH</b>	Reproductive Health
<b>SDGs</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>TFR</b>	Total Fertility Rate
<b>SMART</b>	Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound
<b>UNFCCC</b>	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Population Fund
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development

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