

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: COMMUNITY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE NEW USAID CLIMATE STRATEGY

On January 27, President Biden issued an [Executive Order](#) calling on agencies to develop climate plans and strategies.

On April 22, during the Leaders' Climate Summit, USAID announced their commitment to [deliver a new Climate Strategy by November 1, 2021, ahead of COP26](#). Ahead of the drafting process, the Agency has engaged in an input phase to solicit recommendations and ideas for inclusion in the Strategy.

As part of this input phase, in June, InterAction convened five listening sessions on USAID's proposed new Climate Strategy, involving 175 people from more than 98 Member NGOs and local partners and 58 USAID representatives. Three of the five sessions were focused on highlighting perspectives and recommendations from local partners in Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, Asia, and the Middle East and included USAID staff from the associated regional bureaus. A fourth session convened by InterAction's water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) working group focused on climate and WASH connections. The largest session highlighted overarching views from InterAction Members and engaged the USAID Climate Leadership Council, Climate Strategy Working Group, and Drafting Team.

Broadly, the NGO community is eager to see a USAID Climate Strategy that is aligned with the *Paris Agreement* and *Sustainable Development Goals*, accelerates the transition to low-carbon development, helps stay below the 1.5°C limit for global warming, and serves as an effective partner for countries' mitigation, adaptation, and impact response plans.

The NGO community also emphasized that this Strategy should center the voices, rights, and livelihoods of local communities.

Based on these listening sessions and collective input from InterAction Members, InterAction consolidated a set of recommendations for USAID on the new Climate Strategy. The recommendations provided to USAID focus on the following three areas:

A. Priority issues for the USAID Climate Strategy to include or address

Priority issues for the new Strategy were identified through a consensus-building process with InterAction Members and included recommendations for the Strategy itself, as well as implementation of the Strategy.

The six priority issues are:

1. Enabling local people and communities to lead climate adaptation and influence mitigation approaches and putting lived experience at the center of the approach.



2. Targeting support for people with high vulnerability to climate impacts and outsized ability to generate lasting adaptive capacity for their communities.
3. Bolstering climate justice, civic space, and land rights required for transformational and lasting outcomes on climate.
4. Creating coherence and measurable change within other sectors:
 - Water resource management and water, sanitation, and hygiene
 - Food security, agriculture, and nutrition
 - Humanitarian response and disaster risk reduction
 - Resilience
 - Natural climate solutions
 - Just transition and workers' rights
 - Gender, children, and youth
 - Conflict and governance
5. Accounting for USAID and implementer emissions, waste, and negative impacts of relief and development work on the environment.
6. Leveraging development finance and the private sector to address key gaps in climate finance and benefit the most vulnerable.

B. Recommendations on external engagement with Partners, NGOs, Congress, and the American public

The first set of recommendations on external engagement focus on strengthening strategic messaging to influence how external groups view the impacts of climate change on development.

The second set of recommendations highlight the need for ongoing consultations with the NGO community to ensure the Strategy considers and reflects input from key stakeholders, including local partners who may be involved in the implementation of the Strategy.

C. Recommendations on Strategy implementation

Recommendations on implementation of the Strategy focus on internal and interagency leadership and coordination; donor requirements for implementers; monitoring, evaluation, and learning; potential indicators; and expertise and training needed.

For more information, please contact [Lindsey Doyle](#) or [Jenny Marron](#).

