

# 2021 NEXT GENERATION SYMPOSIUM FELLOW SPOTLIGHT

## MEET MOLLY GILLIGAN

Molly Gilligan (she/her) is a Gender and Environmental Policy Specialist with international experience supporting the development of gender-responsive environmental and climate change policies and programs. Molly has specialized experience in measuring the gender-environment nexus through indicator development, data collection, analysis, and knowledge product development, with partners across environmental and development spheres at international, regional and national levels. Molly has experience facilitating stakeholder engagement and capacity building sessions, as well as presenting at international forums. She holds an M.S. in Environmental Policy from Bard College and a B.A. in Environmental Geology from Colgate University.



### TELL US ABOUT YOUR RESEARCH

Curiosity is a key component for my career as a Gender and Climate Specialist. I am interested in a wide range of topics, allowing me to embrace the needs of partners and immerse myself into research to support their goals. However, if I were to explore my own areas of interest, I would focus on the water sector; in both urban and rural settings, gender inequality, climate change impacts, and peace and security challenges certainly intersect around access to and control of water resources. I am interested in following-up on our gender inequality, climate change vulnerability, and state fragility research by developing in-depth case studies on some of the countries of highest prevalence of these triple nexus issues, exploring the water sector, among other key sectors as relevant to the specific context.

### WHAT MAKES YOU HOPEFUL ABOUT THE FUTURE OF GENDER AND CLIMATE CHANGE?

I am hopeful that considering the interlinked nature of gender inequality, climate change vulnerability, and international security will advance efforts toward sustainable development, including enhancing the well-being of women worldwide. There is no time to waste on any of these topics, but I am hopeful that progress in one area can spur progress in the others.

### WHAT LED YOU TO PURSUE A CAREER IN CLIMATE AND SECURITY?

With a background in environmental geology and climate science, and a Master's in environmental policy, I became interested in how communities interact with and rely upon their natural environments. Women and girls around the world hold household and community-level responsibilities for natural resources management, yet they are less likely than the men in their communities to have decision-making power or equitable benefit-sharing. I am passionate about the positive impact that gender-responsive climate policies can have in terms of both environmental goals and women's empowerment.

### WHAT DOES BEING AN NGS FELLOW MEAN TO YOU?

Being an NGS fellow, to me, means an opportunity to connect with and learn from others working on fascinating research and programme topics. While I am excited to share my work on gender and climate change, learning more about violent extremism and emerging technologies from other NGS fellows and experts will help me to approach the challenges faced by women I work with in a more holistic way.

## WHAT'S A MEMORABLE MOMENT FOR YOU?

With IUCN and UN Environment, I was honored to coordinate and facilitate knowledge-sharing and capacity building workshops on national-level gender-environment statistics and the Sustainable Development Goals with government officials and key stakeholders in Lao, Kenya, and Jordan--as well as support a workshop in Mexico. These experiences brought together officials and stakeholders from numerous relevant sectors, including officials from ministries of environment, ministries of women's affairs/national gender equality mechanisms, and national offices of statistics, among many others. Beyond these extremely enriching professional experiences, memorable moments from these trips included learning traditional fabric dyeing techniques from a vocational training center for women in Lao, a day-trip safari through Nairobi National Park, and staying at a bedouin camp and hiking through Petra in Jordan.



## PUBLICATIONS

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