

Session 6

Women Agents of Change: Experiences in Sectors for a Great Environmental Impulse with Gender Equality

September 28th, 2021

Key Message Report

Introduction

The objective of the session was to *exchange and discuss different experiences in which the gender approach has been integrated into adaptation and mitigation in different sectors*. In today's session, experiences on the subject that have been developed in the countries of Dominica and Guatemala were presented.

This session was moderated by Antonela Busconi, Gender Advisor at the Climate Change Secretariat of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development of Argentina. Then, Camila Gramkow, Economic Affairs Officer of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) made a presentation on *strategic sectors for green recovery with equality and sustainability*.

Continuing with the experiences, Francine Baron, Chief Executive Officer, Climate Resilience Execution Agency for Dominica (CREAD) presented the experience of Dominica on how to *advance gender equality in environmental migration and disaster displacement in the Caribbean*. This was followed by the experience of Guatemala, where Marleny Oliva, Coordinator of the Gender, Multiculturalism and Persons with Disabilities Unit, Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources of Guatemala, shared *experiences of gender considerations in REDD+*.

The main messages of the session are summarized below. [Link to the live broadcast](#)

Key messages

On gender equity in sectors:

- Addressing the climate crisis requires actions based on changes in production patterns through the development of new instruments and technological innovations that ensure a just transition towards sustainability under principles of gender justice.
- LAC is highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change despite its low contribution to global emissions, so climate action proposals must identify policies for strategic sectors that reduce emissions, strengthen adaptation, create jobs and boost investment.
- Advancing the implementation of gender-responsive climate action requires an intersectional approach that recognizes the diversity of women's needs and interests. Along with providing women with the necessary capacities and tools to enable them to adapt and survive in the face of disasters caused by climate change.
- Achieving a path of growth with equality, gender-responsive and sustainable requires actions that strengthen the use of strategies based on the bioeconomy; promote sustainable mobility models, appropriate for care activities, and that ensure women's autonomy. Together with the promotion of a circular economy in which women's participation in formal and informal activities is recognized, both in the public and private sectors.
- The role of the State is fundamental for the development of public policies to confront the pandemic and to connect the socio-health crisis with a transformative recovery with equality and sustainability.

Camila Gramkow (ECLAC) *Strategic sectors for transformative recovery with equality and sustainability*¹.

- We cannot return to a pre-pandemic style of development, which is marked by great unsustainability in the economic, social and environmental dimensions.
- ECLAC is working to develop a new approach called *Big Push for Sustainability or Big Push*, which seeks to develop strategies and areas to achieve a real transformation for sustainability and equity.
- The Great Impulse is based on three main axes:

¹ Based on the publication "[A dimensão de gênero no Big Push para a Sustentabilidade no Brasil](#)".

- First, a **diagnosis** or an assessment of how **current development styles** are in the three dimensions: social, economic and climate. We have an analysis called the 3-gap model to define development in these areas. There are big challenges to close the gaps in all three dimensions simultaneously.
- The second axis is related to **inaction**, as would be the future in the face of inaction. If we do not address the three development gaps, they will get worse.
- The third axis has to do with **sustainable investments**, where the investment approach must dynamize the economy, due to its transforming role in the long term.

The Gender Dimension in the Great Boost for Sustainability

Research has been conducted to find out how the gender dimension is in the Big Push for Sustainability. Why is it called the Big Push?

To achieve real transformation is necessary:

- **Rationale:** Massive investments in strategic areas, in line with a Big Push for Sustainability, are necessary to change the current scenario of deep gender inequalities and growing environmental unsustainabilities. However, how do sustainable investments impact women? There are many approaches such as green growth and the Green New Deal, but it is not clear what are the impacts on renewable energy, electromobility, among others, on how it impacts women and girls.
- **Objective:** To understand which policies and measures related to climate change can contribute to the achievement of gender equality, with a focus on the sexual division of labour and the social organization of care - in this case - in Brazil.
- **Collective construction process:** Production of an initial input for discussion -preliminary report-; Office of consultations with relevant actors; Suggestions received in writing; Production of the final report.
- **Partners:** ECLAC, UN Women Brazil and Friedrich Ebert Foundation Brazil.

The impacts of climate inaction on the gender dimension:

- **Inaction in the face of the climate emergency will have disproportionate impacts on women, girls and feminized bodies** because, primarily, the climate crisis arises against a backdrop of deep and structural gender inequalities, which are intricately linked to other inequalities, such as racial, class, ethnic and origin inequalities.
- **An exhausting starting point.** Women are today a group more susceptible than men to vulnerabilities in terms of monetary poverty, time poverty, work overload and unpaid care, precariousness of insertion in the labour market, among others.

In the case of Brazil:

- According to IBGE data, women spend almost twice as much time (on average 21.4 hours of work per week) compared to men (who spend 11 hours per week) on unpaid domestic and/or care work.
- Women receive, on average, 21.3 per cent lower wages than men (and 24.4 per cent lower for women workers and the unemployed).
- An intersectional analysis was carried out, which, considering the racial dimension, shows that women of African descent receive a salary 55.6 per cent lower than that of white men.
- Afro-descendant, indigenous, "quilombola", peripheral, poor women and feminized bodies that do not comply with the normative are groups especially exposed to the impacts of climate inaction, which underlines **environmental racism**.

The gender dimension impacts of climate inaction

- The increased *frequency and intensity of extreme events* may make these vulnerable women even more exposed to adversity, as they have *fewer tools* to adapt.
- They tend to have *greater time poverty*, as they are the ones who tend to leave their jobs to care for others (unpaid care).

The gender dimension of climate action opportunities

- **Key message: Transformative recovery with gender equality and environmental sustainability requires massive investments, whether for their dynamizing role in creating jobs and incomes in the short term, or for their transformative capacity for long-term development.**
- These investments can represent opportunities for women, girls and feminized bodies, among them:
 - Access to jobs and income for women in all their diversity.
 - Improve the availability and quality of care services, reducing women's time poverty.
 - Contribute to women's economic autonomy.

However, these impacts are not automatic and require coordination of investments and policies in strategic areas.

Strategic areas for sustainable investments with gender equality:

- **Education and training for equal access to green jobs**
 - In most of the "green" sectors, women's participation is in the minority and the sector is masculinized. For example, in renewable energies, women represent only 11.7% of jobs in Brazil.
 - Investment in education and skills training is needed to equip women with the necessary skills to benefit equally from the new green jobs of the future.

- **Renewable energies**
 - These investments would bring access to electricity to the nearly 1 million people who remain without access to electricity in Brazil, including indigenous, quilombola, rural, water and forest women and girls.
 - The wind energy sector alone could generate more than 200,000 new jobs in Brazil by 2026, of which women could benefit.

- **Electromobility of urban public transport**
 - Investments in this area would significantly reduce emissions of GHGs and other air pollutants in cities, with important impacts on health and productivity.
 - It would also reduce travel time and better integrate the periphery and urban centers, creating more opportunities for women to access better jobs, education and training, and health services.

- **Sustainable agricultural production**
 - Brazil could lose 11 million hectares of arable land by 2030 if global warming is not contained, which will directly impact family farming.
 - Investments in sustainable agriculture, prioritizing women-led farms and **valuing their traditional knowledge**, are key to resilient agricultural production that guarantees food security and sovereignty.

- **Health and care**
 - Women account for 76% of occupations in the health sector.
 - Investments in intensive care resources, equipment, home-based care programmes and increased availability of health professionals are also critical to generating employment opportunities for women.
 - Climate change is expected to exert great pressure on health systems with an increase in extreme weather events and disease.

- **Water management and basic sanitation**
 - It is a central area for reducing women's time poverty, improving family health status and freeing up their time to care for the sick.
 - It contributes to the economic autonomy of rural women.
 - Example: The 1 Million Cisterns Program, whose investments amounted to more than R\$3.6 billion, benefiting 1.2 million families, between 2003 and 2018, freed women from traveling long distances to fetch water, generating income, improving family health.

Publication: [The gender dimension in the Great Boost for Sustainability in Brazil: women in the context of the social and ecological transformation of the Brazilian economy.](#)

Experience 2:

Francine Baron, Executive Director, Climate Resilience Implementation Agency for Dominica (CREAD), **Advancing Gender Equality in Environmental Migration and Disaster Displacement in the Caribbean: The Dominica Experience.**

Context

- We need to invest now in preparedness to mitigate future protection needs and prevent further climate-induced displacement. Waiting for disaster to strike is not an option." ~Filippo Grandi United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
- Dominica and the Caribbean is one of the most vulnerable regions in the world to extreme weather events. Climate change is causing more frequent and intense extreme weather events.

In 2017, Hurricane Maria devastated Dominica...The impact?

- 22% of our GDP was lost
- 90% of the houses were damaged and/or destroyed.
- 67 people dead or missing
- Schools were unable to function for approximately six months
- Economic activity came to a halt
- Millions spent in the recovery process
- A natural disaster can undo decades of work and investment.
- CC is a real problem that we have to deal with.
- The most vulnerable in society will be disproportionately affected.

In the immediate aftermath, Hurricane Maria triggered a mass exodus of people from Dominica in a disorganized manner....

- 35,000 people were displaced in the country.
- 2017 hurricane season caused three million displaced in the Caribbean

How do hurricanes affect people, especially women?

- Women tend to be at a disadvantage, as there are traditional expectations they must meet.
- UNDP - Women have less time for paid work, decision-making or knowledge acquisition.
- Dominica is a resilient nation, but gender inequalities disproportionately affect women.
- The fact that women lag behind men in economic recovery and opportunity needs to be addressed

What is the timeline and key components for achieving resilience after Hurricane Maria?

- Dominica developed a National Resilience Development Strategy (NRDS) and a Climate Resilience and Recovery Plan (CRRP) to be implemented by 2030.
- The CRRP identified that gender should be mainstreamed into policies and programmes and this required taking into account inequalities between men and women and developing specific measures to include vulnerable groups.
- Both policy documents recognize the importance of an integrated gender approach
- CREAD is primarily responsible for the implementation of the CRRP.
- CREAD has ensured that women are part of the disaster management process.

So far, what critical results have been achieved on our resilience journey?

Draft National Gender Plan of Action

- Resilient communities must have access to water, food, shelter and other necessities.
- A key objective is to have communities operating for a minimum of 15 days.
- There is a disaster plan, a committee, places where people can stay so that migration and displacement can be avoided.
- These plans make it possible to create interventions that elaborate a comprehensive process
- Gender sensitivity needs to be an important part of disaster preparedness and response

The action plan seeks to improve budget processes, protocols and systems.

- Removing barriers and increasing women's participation in policy-making is key:
 - 34% of the national parliament are women
 - 81 per cent of Permanent Secretaries are female
- Key to building resilience is the economic empowerment of women, especially the many small businesses owned by women.
- A national fund has been set up to support these traders.
- Two regional emergency shelters designed specifically for women and children have been built. Schools can also be shelter sites.

- A large proportion of businesses are uninsured or underinsured and post-disaster financing is essential and women are at a disadvantage with property ownership. Assets must be protected and people helped to recover.
- With partners we have created a flexible hurricane protection system - Blockchain parametric product. According to the proximity of a hurricane to Dominica, there is a payment regardless of whether they suffer damage or not, payments are processed expeditiously.

What key lessons have been learned on the resilience journey so far?

- Economic differences between men and women should be taken into account in policy development. Benefit systems would include special measures to protect vulnerable groups.
- Gender inequalities within society have become even more evident as a resilient nation develops.
- An integrated gender approach should be used in planned actions, policies and programmes in all sectors.
- Importance of community disaster plans to be followed to minimize the impact of disasters.
- A substantial proportion of households, businesses and livelihoods in Dominica were uninsured or underinsured.
- Creativity and innovation in addressing the many challenges we face as Small Island Developing States is paramount.

Experience 3

Marleny Oliva, Coordinator of the Gender, Multiculturalism and Persons with Disabilities Unit, Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources of Guatemala. **Experiences of gender considerations in REDD+**

We will address the following three topics:

- Participatory construction with women leaders
- Addressing women's practical and strategic needs
- Full and effective participation

Methodology

How was it done?

- When REDD+ began in Guatemala, an assessment of the country was conducted, which indicated that it was not addressing gender considerations.
- Then we started working with the gender lead institutions, which helped make it a participatory process. We mapped the actors in the prioritized REDD+ zones and identified the women leaders.

We included academia, gender experts who could support the process. With this stakeholder mapping we started with:

- Strengthening knowledge on REDD+ for women leaders.
- Linking women and men with the forest, with interesting methodologies such as the women's tree, where the links that women had with the forest began to emerge. We understood what they did and wanted and they started to come out:
- Proposal of concrete actions of women from the grassroots.
- We did a process of all the information, we came up with 8 gender considerations in four components, which were placed in the REDD+ Strategy of Guatemala as the Gender Route. These considerations were related to concrete actions.

These components and considerations are:

Component 1: culturally relevant and gender-sensitive consultation and participation

1. Equal access and tenure rights for women and men
2. Equal distribution for women and men

Component 2: Preparation of the REDD+ strategy

3. Improving the livelihoods and well-being of women and men
4. Good governance, leadership and women's empowerment in decision making.

Component 3: Development of a baseline scenario

5. Maintain and enhance biodiversity and environmental services for the equitable benefit of women and men.
6. Full and effective participation of women

Component 4: Forest information system and governance framework of the monitoring, reporting and verification system

7. Equitable access to and ownership of information
8. Compliance with local, national and international laws, treaties and conventions on women's rights.

Lessons learned

- Women should be allowed to express themselves, based on their felt needs, and the essence of their contributions should not be lost at the moment of elaborating actions.
- Climate change and forestry technical staff should work with gender units to achieve effective gender mainstreaming.

- It is necessary to ensure the participation of women leaders in the whole process (mapping of actors).
- Link the construction process with the national and international legal framework to provide support and sustainability, carrying out a prior analysis of the specific legislation for women that is linked to the normative frameworks in forests.
- Women should be allowed to express themselves, based on their felt needs, and the essence of their contributions should be preserved at the time of elaborating actions.
- Promote dialogue in women-only spaces, other spaces for men, and other mixed spaces to ensure a more inclusive approach. In spaces where only women participated, dialogue and empowerment of gender considerations in the national REDD+ process was favored.
- Consider translation into the local language.
- Consider payment of per diems to women from communities that participate in the different processes.

Key message of the session: It is imperative to understand, value and validate the diversity of women and feminized entities, their socio-environmental knowledge and productive work for the formulation and design of sectoral projects. Women, in their plurality, are agents of change to achieve climate sustainability.