



Innovative solutions to face climate change and promote women's economic empowerment in a changing region

Thursday 30 of January 2020

18.00 – 19.30PM,

Auditorio Fernando Fajnzylber, CEPAL

Context:

The XIV Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean takes place at an important moment. It coincides with a period during which new commitments of action and implementation regarding gender and climate change will be established. It coincides with the 25th anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995) and the approval of the Platform for Action, five years of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals, as well as the celebration of the 40 years of the CEDAW. The Conference also converges with the new negotiations to define the future of the Lima Work Program on Gender (PTLG) and the second version of the Gender Action Plan (PAG) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), whose objective is to promote the integration of gender considerations in the work carried out by the Parties and the Secretariat. An agreement on the GAP was reached during the XXV Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC that was held in Madrid from December 2 -13, 2019. It also coincides with the renewal of the National Determined Contributions at the National Level (NDC) that will take place in 2020.

This international scenario presents a unique opportunity to demonstrate the linkages between the 2030 Agenda, the commitments to promote gender equality in climate action included in the Paris Agreement and the UNFCCC gender mandates related to various issues. For example, the Paris Agreement in its preamble recognizes that “*the Parties should respect, promote and take into account their respective relative obligations, (...) gender equality, women's empowerment and intergenerational equity*”. General recommendation 37 of the CEDAW Committee on gender dimensions in disaster risk reduction in the context of climate change (2018) indicates that “*States parties and other stakeholders have the obligation to take concrete measures to address discrimination against women in the areas of [...] climate change through the application of laws, policies, and mitigation and adaptation strategies, the allocation of budgets and the adoption of other specific measures. [...] The right of women to participate at all levels of decision-making must be guaranteed in policies and programs on climate change*”.

In addition, the climate agenda and financing has evolved from being gender-neutral to being gender-responsible. Since 2001, multiple gender mandates have been agreed upon that invite countries to develop and implement mitigation, adaptation, financing, technology transfer and capacity development actions that promote gender equality and women's empowerment. In the case of financing, most of the international

institutions and vertical funds that provide financing for climate initiatives have gender policies. For example, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) has a Gender Equality Policy that establishes the guiding principles and mandatory requirements to integrate gender into the management and operations of the GEF. In addition, the Green Climate Fund has a Gender Equality Policy and a 2018-2020 Gender Action Plan whose objective is to support climate change interventions and innovations through a gender sensitive approach.

This international regulatory framework, supported by gender-responsible climate finance, offers a unique opportunity for the countries of the region to coordinate their actions and promote gender equality, climate action and women's empowerment. In recent years, the Latin American and Caribbean region has taken an important turn in this direction by proposing a series of initiatives at different levels (political, institutional, programmatic) that show that it is possible to implement gender-responsive climate and environmental initiatives.

Justification:

Climate change is one of the biggest global challenges in environmental, social and economic terms. It is a critical factor for the full and effective realization of human rights, women's autonomy and poverty eradication. In Latin America and the Caribbean, climate change shows an asymmetric situation: the region is responsible for less than 10% of global carbon dioxide emissions, however, it is highly vulnerable to its effects due to its geographical and climatic characteristics, its socioeconomic, demographic and institutional conditions and the high climate sensitivity of its natural assets (Bárcena et al. 2017). Thus, the different impacts of climate change on men and women can be exacerbated in environments that are simultaneously affected by violence, political instability and changing economic scenarios. All this together has implications for the sustainable development and autonomy of women.

Although international gender mandates related to mitigation and adaptation represent a clear guide for countries and implementing agencies, at national and local level, there are a number of enabling factors that need to be promoted: a) national climate policies and strategies that mainstream gender; b) a gender perspective that is adequately institutionalized in environmental institutions; c) and that the word "action" be translated into the design and implementation of climate and environmental initiatives that promote gender equality and the women's empowerment appropriately and effectively, throughout the cycle of their programs and projects.

The objective of this side-event is to create a space for dialogue and reflection on these challenges and how countries in the region have managed to overcome them to raise and implement climate responses that favor greater gender equality and women's economic empowerment in a context of changing economic and sociodemographic scenarios. Specifically, this event will focus on highlighting innovative environmental solutions that are creating the effective conditions for greater equality at multiple levels (legislative, political, institutional and programmatic). The event will pay special attention to the growing opportunities

and challenges to promote greater articulation and inter-institutional dialogue between national women's mechanisms and environmental ministries to ensure inclusive and sustainable gender-responsive actions in policies, initiatives, and strategies of mitigation and adaptation that contribute to strengthening climate resilience and improving well-being and livelihoods.

The objectives:

- Make visible how the impacts of climate change and climate-related disasters, associated with scarcity of resources and climate-driven migration, can impact - directly and indirectly - the empowerment and autonomy of women.
- Highlight advances in international and national policies and instruments on gender and climate change and the need to move from political consensus on gender and climate change to actual implementation.
- Promote a multi-stakeholder exchange of good practices on innovative solutions to face climate change that favor the economic empowerment of women at different levels (normative, political, institutional and programmatic).
- Reflect on key recommendations to favor greater inter-institutional articulation and transformative results in terms of gender equality in climate change actions.

Agenda:

18.00 – 18.05: Welcoming remarks, **Bibiana Aido Almagro**, UN Women representative, Ecuador

18.05 – 18.25: Presentation of the impact of climate change and climate-related disasters women's economic empowerment and autonomy, **Itzá Castañeda**, Consultant (for ECLAC and UNDP) and civil society representative

18: 25 -18: 35: Presentation Innovative solutions to face climate change and promote women's economic empowerment in a changing region (Preliminary Report UNDP-UNEP-UN Women), **Guillermina Martín UNDP**.

18.35 – 18.45: Presentation on strategies to address the challenges of climate change from a gender perspective and what role of the Ministry of Women can play in influencing national policies, programmes and strategies on climate change adaptation and mitigation, **Samantha Marshall**, Minister of Social Transformation and Human Resource Development, Antigua and Barbuda.

18.45 – 18.55: Presentation of innovative solutions to face climate change that favor women's economic empowerment in Costa Rica, **Adriana Murillo Ruin, Ambassador of Costa Rica in Chile**.

18.55 – 19.20: Questions and answers with the audience

19.20 – 19.30: Closing remarks, **Bibiana Aido Almagro**, UN Women representative, Ecuador