Women’s autonomy in changing economic scenarios

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Executive Secretary
Global disruptions, interrelated crises and the urgency of a new development model

- Globalization has not found political or economic legitimacy
- Unregulated capitalism, financialization and market forces, turned upon themselves, undermine their own continuity
- Poor economic outcomes and austerity are sharpening recession and inequality
- Geopolitical, trade and technological rivalries
- Weakening of multilateralism
- Migration forced by poverty, violence and environmental crisis
- Growing inequalities are eroding the social contract and public confidence
- Environmental destruction and climate change

The paradox: international cooperation is declining just when it is most needed to implement the 2030 Agenda
The backdrop in our region: the culture of privilege and inequality

- Disillusionment and anger in the region have reached a breaking point with respect to the continuity of the existing model.
- This model is associated with three decades of wealth concentration and environmental deterioration, with insufficient growth.
- Institutions that reproduce the behaviours of agents with the greatest economic and political power.
- A propensity for rent-seeking originally fuelled by privileged access to ownership of natural resources and to the financial economy.
- The culture of privilege, a vestige of our colonial past, normalizes social hierarchies and highly unequal access to the fruits of progress, political deliberation and production assets.
- The culture of privilege naturalizes inequalities and discrimination and it approaches equity—not inequality—from a welfarist perspective, rather than one of empowerment.
Gender inequality, a structural feature of Latin America and the Caribbean

The commitments undertaken in the Regional Gender Agenda must be expedited as a matter of urgency, in order to address the challenges of changing scenarios:

- Economic and financial globalization
- Digital revolution
- Demographic change
- Climate change

and devise comprehensive policies to address women’s autonomy in all its dimensions
Dismantling the structural obstacles in changing scenarios

Socioeconomic inequality and persistent poverty
Patriarchal, discriminatory and violent cultural patterns
Unfair sexual division of labour and unjust social organization of care
Concentration of power and hierarchical relations in the public sphere

Economic and financial globalization
Digital revolution
Demographic change
Climate change
The countries with lower poverty levels have higher rates of poverty feminization.

Source: ECLAC, on the basis of the Household Survey Data Bank (BADEHOG).
The culture of privilege naturalizes multiple types of discrimination and inequalities

**Latin America (weighted average for 4 countries):** hourly income of the employed population aged 15 years or older, by years of schooling, gender and ethno-racial status, around 2017 (International dollars)

**Source:** ECLAC, on the basis of the Household Survey Data Bank (BADEHOG).
The unjust social organization of care impacts more on women and is growing among lower-income households

**Latin America (6 countries):** unpaid working time of the population aged 15 or over, by income quintile and sex

*(Hours per week)*

**Source:** ECLAC, on the basis of the Household Survey Data Bank (BADEHOG).
Changing macroeconomic scenarios

Uncertain international conditions
- Low growth in the world economy
- Slower international trade growth amid trade tensions
- More fragile international financial markets

Complex regional context
- Widespread economic slowdown synchronized across countries and sectors
- Persistent external vulnerability
- Income inequality reduction stalled and poverty rising
- Worsening employment conditions affect women more
- Mounting social demands for rights
Transmission channels

Global economic and financial tensions impact countries and sectors through:

- Trade
- Financial system
- Tax system

Costs and benefits of economic and financial globalization are not equitably distributed:

- Workers
- Consumers
- Businesspeople
- Those responsible (or not) for unpaid care work
Production specialization and gendered occupational segregation limits or enhances women’s employment in the framework of international trade

**South America**

A natural resource-intensive export pattern generates little employment and less for women

**Central America**

Manufacturing for export generates more employment for women, but mostly in low-tech sectors with gender wage gaps

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**South America (weighted average for 9 countries):** distribution of the population employed in manufacturing by sex and level of technology intensity, around 2017 (Percentages)

**Central America (weighted average for 6 countries):** distribution of the population employed in manufacturing by sex and level of technology intensity, around 2017 (Percentages)

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*Source: ECLAC, on the basis of the Household Survey Data Bank (BADEHOG).*
In a global context of increasing financial market expansion, women continue to face adverse credit access conditions.

**Latin America and the Caribbean (weighted average for 18 countries):** participation in formal financial activities by sex, 2017 (Percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Account with a financial institution</td>
<td>50.6</td>
<td>56.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Formal savings account</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>9.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Formally requested a loan</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>15.5</td>
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</table>

**Total amount of credit extended to women**
(Per 100 units extended to men)

- Guatemala, 2018: 59%
- Chile, 2018: 57%
- Costa Rica, 2017: 67%

Source: ECLAC, on the basis of Superintendency of Banks and Financial Institutions (SBIF), Género en el Sistema Financiero, Santiago, 2016 and 2018; Superintendency of Banks (SIB), Boletín Trimestral de Inclusión Financiera: Sistema Bancario, Guatemala City, 2017; National Institute of Women/General Financial Institute Audit Bureau/Development Banking System (INAMU/SUGEF/SBD), Informe de brechas entre hombres y mujeres en el acceso y uso del sistema financiero en Costa Rica, San José, 2019; and data from national surveys.
The culture of privilege in tax systems: tax evasion hinders the redistribution of wealth and income

- **Evasion and avoidance**
  - 6.3% of GDP
  - 150% of spending on social protection

- **Tax spending**
  - 3.7% of GDP

- **Tax rate**
  - 18% of GDP

End evasion and avoidance to gain more fiscal space to finance pro-equality policies

Rethink tax spending

Progressive tax policies including:

- Household structure as a criterion for determining tax capacity
- Deductions for care of dependent persons
- Exemptions for basic need products
- Tax treatment to promote women’s labour participation
Policy guidelines for achieving greater equality in a complex global environment

- Trade policies and agreements must reduce asymmetries in production and technologies between countries and create opportunities for quality employment.

- Gear finances towards the real economy, close gender gaps in access to and use of financial services and avoid women’s overindebtedness.

- Make tax systems more progressive, review tax spending, control evasion and illicit financial flows and allocate sufficient resources to gender equality policies.

- Invest in care systems that have multiplier effects on women’s labour market participation and on the redistribution of time and income.
Digital revolution: trends and impacts on women’s lives
Automation will bring changes in the organization of paid work, mainly affecting activities involving routine tasks.

### Latin America (16 countries): distribution of the working population and income gap by type of occupation and sex, weighted averages around 2017

*(Percentages)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Labour income gap per hour between women and men</th>
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<tr>
<td>Elementary occupations</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>27.2</td>
<td>11.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Service workers and shop and market sales workers</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>22.9</td>
<td>7.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professionals</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>7.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clerks</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>6.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Technicians and associate professionals</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislators, senior officials and managers</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>0.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Craft and related trade workers</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>11.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plant and machine operators, and assemblers</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>10.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skilled agricultural and fisheries workers</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>3.6</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** ECLAC, on the basis of the Household Survey Data Bank (BADEHOG).
Women are underrepresented in science, technology, engineering and mathematics, which limits their possibilities of a better position in the economy.

### Latin America and the Caribbean (17 countries and territories): graduates in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), by sex, latest year available

(Percentages)

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</table>

**Source:** ECLAC, Social Panorama of Latin America, 2018 (LC/PUB.2019/3-P), Santiago, 2019.
Information as a key element for making public services more efficient and better quality, increasing transparency and advancing towards gender equality

Areas of potential

- Use of social networks to foster gender equality
- Big data: an opportunity to cast light on gender gaps
- Social network campaigns (#NiUnaMenos #AmoeEs #NoDaCompartir)
- More accessible State services and timely information on procedures and tax payments

Threats

- Economic power in the hands of a few global firms
- Invasion of privacy and security breaches
- Anonymity, massification and coordination between perpetrators of gender violence

Some population groups still lag behind in access to technological services

- Digital elites
- 36.8% digitally excluded
Violence against women through digital media manifests itself in multiple, interrelated and often recurring forms.

Policy guidelines for a digital revolution with equality

- Promote regional cooperation to discuss and design regulations on employment protection and taxation of platform companies
- Strengthen regional governance regarding technology, data use, knowledge transfer in key sectors, and prevention of online gender-based violence
- Foster inclusion of women in innovative sectors such as technology, energy and in other emerging sectors, with a view to the future of work
The care economy

- Women contribute to functioning economies through an invisible contribution to unpaid work
- Investing in the care economy contributes to diversification of the production structure, economic growth and equality, without breaching ecological limits for the reproduction of life
Gender stereotypes are transferred to the labour market, where women are concentrated in care roles.

Latin America (weighted average of 15 countries): distribution of the employed population aged 15 or over by paid domestic and care work, around 2017 (Percentages)

One third of employed women work in segments of the care economy.

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of Household Survey Data Bank (BADEHOG)
It is essential for unpaid work to be recognized, valued and redistributed by 2030

Latin America (18 countries): time spent on unpaid household chores and care, by sex and type of unpaid work, latest available year

(Percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Domestic work</th>
<th>Care work</th>
<th>Total of domestic and care work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Argentina, 2013</td>
<td></td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>13.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bolivia (Plur. State of),* 2001</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brazil,* 2017</td>
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<td>Chile, 2015</td>
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<td>Costa Rica, 2017</td>
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<td>Guatemala, 2017</td>
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<td>Nicaragua,* 1998</td>
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<td>Paraguay, 2016</td>
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<td>Peru, 2010</td>
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<td>Dominican Rep., 2016</td>
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<td>Uruguay, 2013</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: ECLAC, on the basis of Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean, Repository of information on time use in Latin America and the Caribbean.

- Does not allow for domestic work to be distinguished from care work.
Under today’s demographic trends, the current distribution of care will increase women’s excessive workload and threaten sustainable development.

**Latin America and the Caribbean (38 countries):** population distribution by age group and sex, 2020 and 2050 *(Thousands of people)*

- Declining fertility
- Adolescent pregnancy
- Greater presence of minors in poor households
- Increasing life expectancy
- Feminization of old age

**Source:** ECLAC, on the basis of United Nations, World Population Prospects 2019
Global care chains: migrant women cover care needs that are not addressed by national policies

69% of Paraguayan women immigrants and 58% of Peruvian women immigrants are in paid domestic work

13% of all female migrants are in paid domestic work

34% of all female migrants are in paid domestic work
Policy guidelines for a care economy with equality

- Foster construction of comprehensive care systems with joined up policies on time, resources, benefits and services.
- Public policies on equality that recognize women’s contribution to the economy through unpaid domestic and care work, and which promote co-responsibility and a fair distribution of the total workload.
- Design social protection and care systems that respond to demographic changes.
- Coordinate regional and subregional policies between countries of origin, transit and destination of women migrants, and guarantee all their rights.
Climate change-related disasters adversely affect women’s economic autonomy

Water shortages

In Guatemala, women living in rural areas spend six hours per week fetching water, nearly a full hour more than men.

A tourism sector under threat

Above all in the Caribbean, many women are employed in the tourism sector and their sources of employment are threatened by natural disasters.

No gender perspective in post-disaster support programmes

Post-disaster support programmes are often based on an implicit assumption that women will devote their time and effort to provide unpaid caregiving services in the wake of a disaster.
Faced with a scenario that threatens the sustainability of life itself, there is an urgent need to create conditions for equality and avoid excluding women from the processes of seeking climate change solutions and responses.

Key challenges for Latin America and the Caribbean:

- **Agriculture**: Changes in agriculture and threat to food sovereignty.
- **Energy**: Energy poverty and efficient, CO₂-free generation systems.
- **Urban areas**: Impact on urban areas, where 80% of the population lives.
- **Forests and biodiversity**: Reduction in forest cover.
- **Coastal areas and water resources**: Rising sea levels and shrinking water resources.

Urgent need to address climate change and its gender-differentiated impact.
National plans and nationally determined contributions that include the gender dimension

Gender and climate change action plans
A tool for responding to the needs of women and for linking up national and global policies and improving policies on climate change and development

7 countries
Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Mexico, Peru and Panama

Gender equality plans/strategies with an environmental dimension
Incorporation of a gender approach in national plans or policies on climate change adaptation

6 countries
Guyana, Grenada, Honduras, Paraguay, Suriname and Uruguay
The rights of women environmental defenders

- Socio-environmental conflicts have worsened in Latin America and the Caribbean.
- Diverse organizations have demonstrated against initiatives that may have adverse impacts at the territorial level.
- Violence against environmental defenders has increased drastically. Latin America has the world’s highest percentage of individuals killed for these reasons.

**Escazú Agreement**

The Agreement aims to ensure the right of all persons to have access to information in a timely and appropriate manner, to participate significantly in making the decisions that affect their lives and their environment, and to access justice when those rights have been infringed.

**Montevideo Strategy**

The Governments agreed to foster the participation of women’s and feminist organizations and movements in the design, implementation, follow-up and evaluation of policies on the mitigation of and response to extreme weather events, risk management and resilience-building at the regional, national, subnational and local levels.
Policy guidelines for addressing climate change with equality

- Align climate change adaptation and mitigation policies with gender equality policies.
- Strengthen coordination between machineries for the advancement of women and ministries of the environment, planning and energy.
- Ensure the conditions for the full participation of women—in all their diversity—in the design and follow-up of public policies on climate change and comprehensive management of disaster risk, especially in the Caribbean.
In sum, to make progress towards gender equality in changing economic scenarios

- Renew multilateralism in Generation Equality and in Beijing+25 to strengthen cooperation and correct asymmetries in response to globalization, the digital revolution, climate change and migration.

- Generate data to support the analysis of different dimensions of inequality and prospective studies on global and regional trends that impact gender equality and women’s autonomy.

- Rethink relations between institutions and structures, involving a broad range of agents to change global and regional power relations and transform privileges into rights.