Guarantee and strengthen access to justice for all women and girls in all their diversity through inclusive and equitable legal systems, the elimination of discriminatory laws, policies and practices, and the removal of structural barriers.

December 2025

UNITED NATIONS

ECLAC

67 Meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean

Santiago (hybrid meeting), 1 and 2 December 2025

UN WOMEN

Access to justice: key for all rights

GLOBAL AND REGIONAL CONTEXT

- Global context of high geopolitical complexity and **multiple development crises**.
- Normative advances in **formal equality**.
- Inequality is structural and gender inequality persists.
- **Substantive gender equality** as an aspiration.

EMERGING TRENDS

- Demographic and epidemiological transformations: care crisis / **right to care**.
- Accelerated advancement of digital technologies.
- Climate change and environmental degradation.
- **Conservative backlash** questioning women's rights.
- Persistence of impunity, discrimination, and violence.

Latin America and the Caribbean call for a decade of action to accelerate the achievement of substantive gender equality and a care society.

Key advances in access to justice

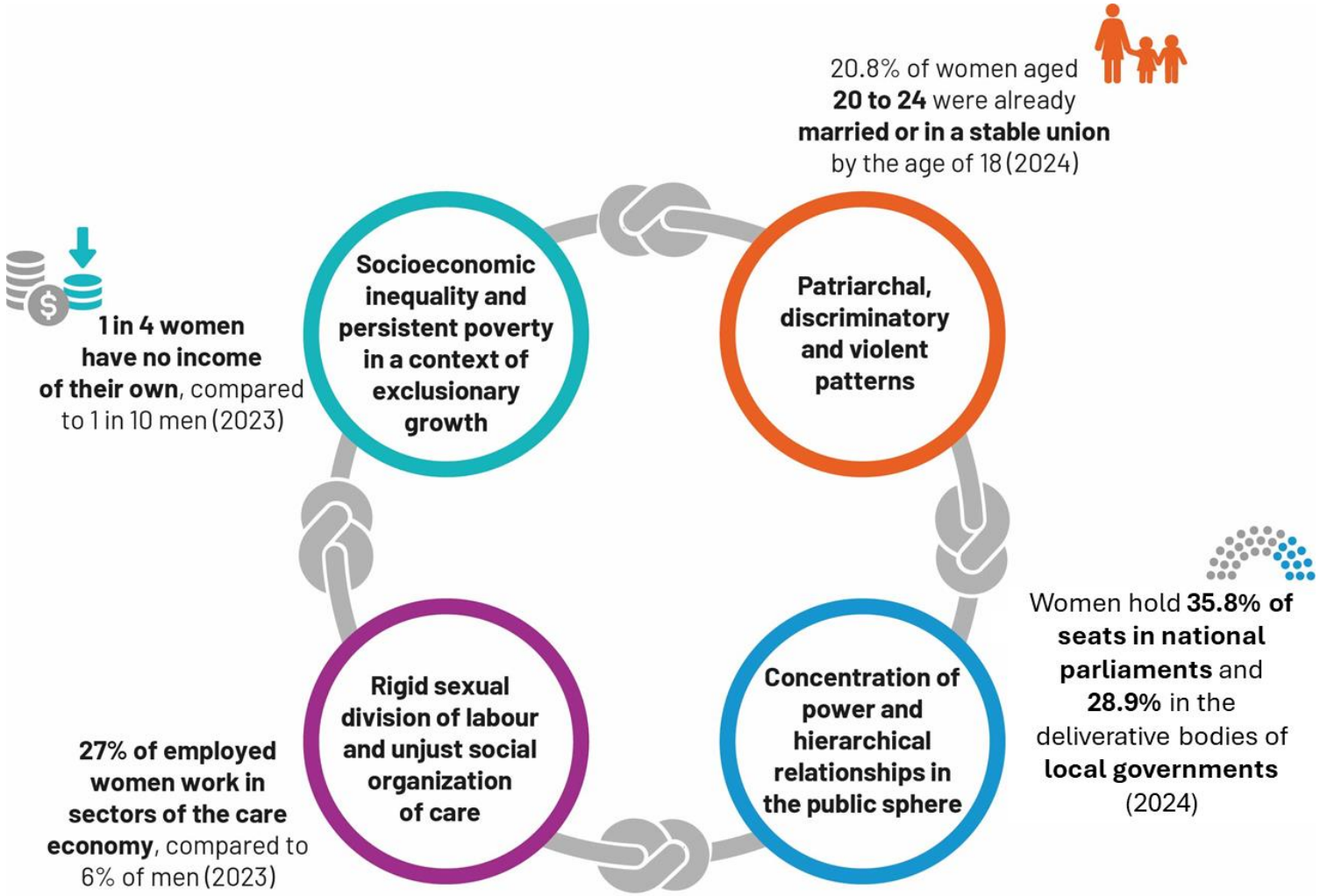
Strengthening **of legal frameworks** and standards

Comprehensive **support services** and institutional coordination

Specialized institutions within justice systems

Advances in data production and information systems

The structural challenges of gender inequality



Sources: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), based on the Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean (GEO); CEPALSTAT [online database]; Household Survey Data Bank (BADEHOG); and the Repository on Time Use in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Normative and statistical advances on care in the region

INTERSECTORAL POLICIES

Guarantee the right to care.

Advance social and gender co-responsibility.

Address the 5R framework

ADVISORY OPINION 31/25 OF THE IACHR

- Care as an autonomous right
- Defines its essential contents
- Strengthens State obligations

NORMATIVE FRAMEWORKS

8
Countries with laws for national systems.

15
Countries with maternity leave longer than 14 weeks.

4
Countries with shared parental leave.

OFFICIAL STATISTICS

24
Countries with time-use measurements.

18
Countries that calculate the SDG care indicator.

5
Countries with a satellite account for unpaid work.

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), *Action for equality, development and peace in Latin America and the Caribbean: regional report on the review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, 30 years on, in synergy with the implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda* (LC/MDM.66/5), Santiago, 2025.

Key advances in access to justice

All countries have legislation to end violence against women.

The region is a global pioneer in the criminalization of femicide.

14 countries:
Comprehensive laws that broaden the understanding of violence

20 countries:
Criminalization of femicide

11 countries:
Regulations on the production of data on violence and/or femicide

15 countries:
Prohibit child marriage

Fuente: Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe. Observatorio de Igualdad de Género de América Latina y el Caribe, sobre la base de repositorio normativo

Key challenges in access to justice

01

Institutional setbacks and limited resources.

02

Persistence of gender stereotypes in judicial decisions.

03

Gaps in investigations of femicides and feminicides.

04

Structural and intersectional barriers in access to justice.

05

Weaknesses in implementation and monitoring of protection measures.

06

Specific forms of violence with limited or delayed State response.

Access to justice in sexual and reproductive rights

- It is essential for substantive equality, bodily autonomy, and non-discrimination.
- Structural barriers persist: criminalization of abortion, denial of services, forced motherhood, and sexual violence, affecting women and girls in vulnerable situations.
- The lack of protocols, specialized defense services, and confidential assistance limits reporting and reparation.

Regional advances

Key Jurisprudence

Colombia (C-055/2022): Abortion as a fundamental right (24 weeks).
Mexico (SCJN, 2023): Unconstitutionality of criminalization in the Federal Penal Code.

These advances drive normative harmonization and public policies to ensure safe abortion, comprehensive sexuality education, and full reparation.

Committee on the Rights of the Child (2023)

It held that denying a therapeutic abortion to an adolescent rape survivor constitutes a grave violation of the Convention.

Human Rights Committee (2025)

It reaffirmed that criminalizing abortion violates rights such as life, health, and dignity, especially in rural areas.

Organized crime and access to justice for women and girls

The expansion of organized crime in the region generates serious human rights violations.

Justice systems show deficits in investigating complex phenomena and weak coordination among institutions.

Women and girls face heightened obstacles: lack of specialized institutions, threats, reprisals, and the absence of effective protocols.

STRUCTURAL FAILURES

Punitive responses fail to address structural causes: women's imprisonment rises for non-violent offenses, while coercion and exploitation are overlooked due to the lack of a gender perspective.

IACHR (2024)

It highlighted impacts on judicial independence and proposed a thematic resolution to strengthen cooperation and promote comprehensive responses with due process, human rights, and a gender perspective.

Sexual and gender-based violence in transitional justice processes

The region has made progress in implementing the women, peace and security agenda in line with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, with 12 countries having adopted at least one national action plan on women, peace and security.

The region also has significant experience with **transitional justice** mechanisms (justice, truth, memory, and reparation) in response to crimes against humanity.

For decades, sexual violence was **subsumed under general crimes** (torture, ill-treatment), without recognizing its specificity as gender-based violence.

Advances: International and national courts (Argentina, Colombia, Peru, Guatemala, and Chile) investigate and prosecute sexual crimes as **autonomous offenses.**

Inequalities in access to criminal justice persist, especially in countries where transitional processes did not incorporate a gender perspective early on.

Protection of environmental women defenders and access to justice

- Environmental and climate crises affect women and girls disproportionately, especially in rural areas.
- It is key to guarantee effective access to environmental and climate justice and the right to defend the environment.
- Women defenders face violence, stigmatization, criminalization, and attacks, including digital violence and doxing.
- Investigations make little progress due to lack of prosecutorial action, evidentiary challenges, and the absence of records that capture patterns of violence.

Standards and normative frameworks

Advisory Opinion 32/25 (IACHR Court): Establishes standards for climate justice: continuous training, intercultural approach, adequate resources, access to scientific knowledge, and ecological restoration.

The Escazú Agreement: Aims to ensure the implementation of the rights of access to environmental information, public participation in environmental decision-making, and access to justice in environmental matters. It requires specific protections for defenders, ensuring a safe and threat-free environment.

Escazú Agreement

It includes specific provisions for women environmental defenders and mandates gender mainstreaming in its implementation.

18 State Parties to the Agreement

Access to justice for Indigenous and Afro-descendant women

- Indigenous and Afro-descendant women face intersectional discrimination compounded by geographic, linguistic, cultural, and economic factors.
- Language barriers create distrust, revictimization, and procedural errors
- It is necessary to align the State system with Indigenous customary law through intercultural mechanisms.
- In rural areas they must travel long distances to reach courts or prosecutor's offices, hindering reporting and proceedings.
- They face institutional discrimination, racial and gender stereotypes, and a lack of resources for legal representation.
- Barriers are also reflected in the overrepresentation of Indigenous and Afro-descendant women in prison.

REGIONAL STRATEGIES AND STANDARDS

- Strategic litigation and anthropological-cultural expert testimony have exposed structural discrimination and led to transformative rulings.
- Specialized protocols for judging with a gender and intercultural perspective.

Access to justice for women with disabilities

- Access to justice requires **recognition of legal capacity,** appropriate supports, and a prohibition on disability-based restrictions.
- Restrictive figures such as guardianship or non-liability prevent full participation in proceedings and filing complaints.
- They are often required to prove their ability to exercise rights, creating double victimization.
- The low presence of persons with disabilities in judicial services reinforces bias and exclusion.
- Economic and dependency-related barriers persist, hindering the ability to report or sustain legal proceedings.

Advances and good practices

- Several countries have advanced significant reforms to eliminate legal barriers.
- **The Caribbean Court of Justice (2023)** developed a guide for justice operators highlighting the need for physical, communication, and attitudinal accessibility at all stages of the process.

Access to justice for LGBTI+ persons

- **Structural inequalities** and violence based on sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression continue to limit access to justice.
- **Persistent barriers**: lack of legal recognition, inadequate services, police negligence, stereotypes, fear of reprisals, and absence of specialized assistance.
- The lack of diligent and impartial investigations **perpetuates impunity and social tolerance** of violence.

⚠ Some countries have established **hate-crime aggravators**, but implementation remains weak due to lack of training, intersectional protocols, and persistent bias.

Access to justice in contexts of human mobility

- **Sustained increase** in migration flows with high participation of women, adolescents and girls.
- **The feminization of mobility** reveals deep gaps in access to rights and justice.
- Irregular migration and insertion into feminized, precarious jobs increase exposure to **violence, exploitation, and trafficking.**
- Legal and practical obstacles persist in obtaining or maintaining residency and in challenging migration decisions.

EMERGING RESPONSES

- ✓ Several countries are promoting free legal aid, legal guidance, institutional cooperation, and attention protocols.
- ⚠ There is still a need to systematically incorporate gender and intersectional approaches in judicial decisions.

Tlatelolco Commitment: adopted on 15 August by member States



XVI Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean
Mexico City, 12–15 August 2025

15 August 2025
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: SPANISH
2500407[E]

Sixteenth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean

Mexico City, 12–15 August 2025

TLATELOLCO COMMITMENT

A DECADE OF ACTION TO ACHIEVE SUBSTANTIVE GENDER EQUALITY AND THE CARE SOCIETY

The member States of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean participating in the sixteenth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, gathered from 12 to 15 August 2025 in Tlatelolco, Mexico City, where the first World Conference on Women was held 50 years ago (1975),

Bearing in mind the obligations assumed by States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979) and the Optional Protocol thereto, the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women (Convention of Belém do Pará, 1994), and other relevant treaties, agreements and conventions, which establish an international legal framework for protecting, upholding and ensuring the human rights of all women, adolescents and girls on the basis of the principles of equality and non-discrimination,

Confirming the continued relevance of the commitments undertaken by the member States of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean since 1977 that make up the Regional Gender Agenda, in particular, the Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030, adopted in 2016, and the Buenos Aires Commitment, adopted in 2022, and reaffirming the commitment to accelerate its full and effective implementation, in synergy with the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which marks its thirtieth anniversary this year, and other international and regional commitments on women's human rights and gender equality,

Recognizing that the current social organization of care in Latin America and the Caribbean is unjust and unequal, and historically, has affected, in particular, Indigenous and Afrodescendent women, adolescents and girls, and acknowledging their significant contribution to the development of societies and the importance of ensuring their full, equal and meaningful participation in all aspects of society,

UNITED NATIONS
ECLAC

UN WOMEN

Source:
https://conferenciamujer.cepal.org/16/es/documentos/compromiso-tlatelolco

- Establishes a **decade of action, 2025–2035,** in Latin America and the Caribbean to accelerate the achievement of substantive gender equality and the care society.
- **Care society: a new paradigm** for sustainable development, equality and peace.
- Care as a **necessity, a human right, a global public good and a key driver of the economy.**
- **Agreements focus on:** normative framework, institutional architecture, participation and strengthening of State capacities; Financing and cooperation; and information, communication and technology systems, monitoring, evaluation and accountability.
- Highlights the commitment to renewed multilateralism, reiterates support for the United Nations system and includes requests for joint work.

XVI Conferencia Regional sobre la Mujer de América Latina y el Caribe
Ciudad de México, 12 al 15 de agosto de 2025

Tlatelolco Commitment

A decade of action: eradicate gender-based violence and guarantee access to justice

Zero violence and discrimination

- Promotion of comprehensive laws and policies against gender-based violence.
- Combat sexual violence, femicide, misogyny, racism, and xenophobia.
- Elimination of harmful practices such as female genital mutilation and child marriage.

Equal access to justice

- Elimination of legal and institutional barriers.
- Specialized, independent, and timely assistance.
- Comprehensive reparation and actions to end impunity.

Right to care

- Recognition of the human right to care and therefore an obligation of the State and a shared responsibility
- Promotion of normative frameworks, policies, and comprehensive systems for sustainable care
- Recognition of IACHR Advisory Opinion 31
- Rights of persons who provide care

Protection for women human rights defenders

- Measures with a gender, intersectional, and intercultural approach.
- Prevention of discrimination and violence against women defenders.
- Access to justice and measures to investigate human rights violations.

Recognition of women's organizations

- Recognition of the historical role and the contributions of women's and feminist organizations
- Support and financing for their participation

Key recommendations to strengthen access to justice

Normative strengthening

Update laws and procedural frameworks to classify all forms of violence, guarantee comprehensive reparation, ensure proportionality in sentencing, and incorporate sexual orientation and gender identity.

Specialized institutional framework

Expand comprehensive services, strengthen protection in territories affected by organized crime, create specialized prosecutor's offices, and ensure gender-responsive investigations.

Mandatory training

Implement continuous training on sexual and reproductive rights, care, organized crime, cultural diversity, gender stereotypes, and migration management.

Financing and cooperation

Ensure sustainable funding, strengthen interinstitutional and international cooperation, improve judicial coordination, and promote joint protection mechanisms.

Information and accountability

Develop interoperable systems, robust records, accessibility assessments, secure reporting technologies, and mechanisms to monitor and measure due diligence.

Follow us on:

https://lac.unwomen.org/es

https://x.com/ONUMujeres

https://www.facebook.com/onumujeres/

https://www.youtube.com/@ONUMujeresLAC

https://www.flickr.com/photos/unwomenamericasandthecaribbean

UNITED NATIONS

ECLAC

UN WOMEN

Follow us on:

https://www.cepal.org/en

https://x.com/eclac_un

https://www.facebook.com/eclac

https://www.youtube.com/user/ECLACUN

https://www.flickr.com/photos/eclac