



Interregional Dialogues of the Women's International Network EU-LAC

"Opportunities and Challenges for Promoting Gender Transformative Climate Action and Disaster Risk Reduction in Latin America and the Caribbean and the European Union"

- Concept Note -

Dates: September 2022-January 2023

Organisation: EU-LAC Foundation, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Format: three virtual dialogues and a final hybrid meeting

Introduction

The **EU-LAC Foundation** is an international intergovernmental organisation established in 2010 by the States of Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) and the European Union (EU), as well as the EU through its institutions. It is based in Hamburg, Germany. Its mandate is to work closely with its 61 members to promote the bi-regional partnership and dialogue and to facilitate the participation of civil society in this dialogue, in order to generate relevant inputs for intergovernmental processes. An essential part of this mission is to build connections and create spaces for dialogue, collaboration, and engagement with decision-makers in thematic areas that are high on the agenda of the strategic partnership between the two regions, such as sustainable social and economic development, climate change, and gender relations.

UNDP works in around 170 countries and territories, supporting them in the eradication of poverty, the reduction of inequalities and exclusion, and the building of resilience. As the UN's development agency, UNDP plays a key role in helping countries achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. UNDP bases its work strategies on lessons learned and evaluation-based recommendations to better support its global, regional, and country programmes. Therefore, these new strategies are geared toward the acceleration of gender equality and women's empowerment as well as ensuring gender mainstreaming in all programmes or institutions with which it collaborates.

The **EU-LAC International Women's Network** is an informal, diverse, plural, and intergenerational space for connection between women from Latin America and the Caribbean and the European Union. Its objective is to promote a dialogue capable of mobilising commitment, knowledge and collective capacities to accelerate transformations in the field of gender equality. The search for synergies and the commitment to create complementarity between governments, civil society and academia are the factors from which the Network aspires to deepen our understanding of the structural causes of gender inequalities and offer innovative solutions to current and

future challenges. The Network promotes women's participation and leadership as agents of change, deepening democracy and their rights, in order to prevent and alert on threats and setbacks. Currently, working groups have prioritised lines of action to advance gender equality in climate action and the care work. Those actions by the Network are committed to multilateralism and the 2030 Agenda to contribute to an inclusive and sustainable bi-regional agenda.

Context

The United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Human Development Report 2020 "The Next Frontier: Human Development and the Anthropocene"¹ highlights that we live in an interconnected world, where social and environmental crises tend to feed on each other, generating vicious circles. In the current context, still marked by the Covid-19 pandemic, it has become evident that the global crises associated with health threats, climate change and biodiversity loss are not gender neutral, implying an aggravated exposure to the negative consequences of these crises for many women and girls.

Various UN analytical documents of the United Nations^{2 3 4} show that there is an inter-causal relationship between inequalities and environmental imbalance in the LAC region. On the one hand, inequalities place women in a situation that reduces their capacity to respond and react to critical situations (resilience), and, in turn, the impacts of social and environmental crises tend to increase inequalities or create new ones. Furthermore, women and men contribute differently to climate solutions according to data from the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)⁵ and various case studies in Latin America⁶. This evidence tells us that it is necessary to include in discussions and political decisions topics such as the differentiated energy uses and needs of women and men; the employment and entrepreneurship of women and men; and the involvement of women's traditional knowledge and practices in mitigation strategies and policy frameworks. Simultaneously, more attention should be given to gender equality in the use, conservation and management of forests.

In this context, European and Latin American and Caribbean women, convinced of the importance of gender equality, human rights, the protection of nature and climate solutions, have promoted actions in favour of ambitious and transformative policies and solutions from different spheres. In order to value these efforts and promote these transformative changes, the participants of the EU-LAC Women's International Network

¹ Document available at: <https://report.hdr.undp.org/es/index.html>

² XXII Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean (2021): Analysis Document: Gender and environment: a preliminary analysis of gaps and opportunities in Latin America and the Caribbean. Document available at: https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/34929/GEN_EN.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

³ ECLAC (2020): Building a new future: a transformative recovery with equality and sustainability. Document available at: https://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/46226/5/S2000665_en.pdf

⁴ UNDP, UN Women, UNEP (2020): From Words to Action: Projects with Innovative Solutions for Nature, Climate Action and Gender Equality. Document available at: <https://lac.unwomen.org/en/digiteca/publicaciones/2020/06/de-las-palabras-a-la-accion-soluciones-innovadoras-naturaleza-accion-climatica-e-igualdad-de-genero#view>

⁵ Document available at European Institute for Gender Equality (2016): Gender in the environment and climate change. Document available at: file:///Users/office29/Downloads/ti_pubpdf_mh0216901enn_pdfweb_20170124144008.pdf

⁶ See: UNDP, UN Women, UNEP (2020)

believe that it is urgent to discuss strategies to revise existing social contracts, address inequalities taking into account intersectional aspects and empower women as agents of change with the capacity to transform social and environmental spaces. Our two regions need, among other things, to highlight the links between climate change, natural disasters, and health emergencies with more sustainable and inclusive development models.

Regional background

The European Union (EU) and its member countries, as well as LAC countries, have expressed their full commitment to gender equality, sustainable development and environmental protection and actively engaged in developing mechanisms and actions to promote these agendas. For example, the Paris Agreement recognises that “*climate change is a common concern of humankind*” and that, “*Parties should, when taking action to address it, respect, promote and consider (...) gender equality, women's empowerment and intergenerational equity*”. Similarly, as noted at the Regional Meeting on Climate Change and Gender Equality led by Chile as COP25 Presidency and with the support of the European Union through its EUROCLIMA+ Programme and ECLAC, held in September 2021, both regions have made ambitious progress in including concrete actions to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in their climate agendas.

Given their shared understanding and commitment, it is an adequate moment for both regions to discuss how to promote new models of nature-based, gender-transformative and risk-informed development. Both regions have a unique opportunity to share experiences, good practices, challenges, and opportunities associated with a gender-just transition towards these new development models. It is necessary to open an inclusive space for discussion around concrete proposals to recognise, value and promote women's empowerment as key actors in climate action and disaster risk reduction.

Objectives of the Interregional Dialogues

Against this background, the EU-LAC Foundation and UNDP, being key actors in generating multi-stakeholder and multi-level dialogues on issues of utmost relevance for LAC and EU cooperation, propose to develop a series of inclusive inter-regional dialogues to identify common obstacles and opportunities and to bring to the fore good practices and innovative solutions that will enable progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment in Climate Action and Disaster Risk Reduction. The dialogues aim to inform decision-makers about promising interventions and practices that have the potential to being upscaled and to strengthen bi-regional cooperation programmes and public policies.

Topics and methodology of the Inter-regional Dialogues

The series of dialogues will be articulated around three main themes:

1. Leadership and inclusion of women in decision-making on implementation of climate actions
2. Emerging issues in gender and climate change: just energy transition, electric mobility, nature-based solutions, climate resilience and gender-transformative risk management

3. The transition to just and low-carbon economies and new gender-transformative development models

Each dialogue will invite women leaders and representatives of networks, civil society organisations, the private sector, academia and public institutions from LAC and the EU who have relevant expertise on the subject matter and who have been designing and implementing exemplary projects, initiatives and/or policies that have the potential to contribute to and strengthen bi-regional cooperation on the issue of climate resilience that promotes gender equality.

Each of these three dialogues will last about two hours and will be held in a virtual format at a time that allows for the attendance of the invited persons on both sides of the Atlantic. Each dialogue will begin with a brief introduction, followed by a presentation of concrete experiences, practices or cases from LAC and the EU in correspondence to the specific theme of the dialogue.

Following the presentation of these experiences, a space will be opened for a panel discussion with experts from different sectors (governments, civil society, academia). The objective of this part of the dialogue will be to listen to different perspectives according to the chosen examples, and to identify similarities and differences between the two regions. The experts will receive beforehand some guiding questions to focus their respective interventions.

At the end of the panel, a space will be opened for the participants to discuss together the current situation and the main challenges and opportunities - on the basis of guiding questions which will be communicated in the invitations to the dialogues, so that participants can prepare their interventions accordingly. In case of a large number of participants, pertinent tools will be used to ensure that everyone can insert their ideas, comments and proposals for strengthening public policies and cooperation programmes between the two regions from a gender-transformative perspective.

At the end of the series of dialogues, a Policy Brief will be prepared compiling the results of the discussions and recommendations for public policies and bi-regional cooperation. The series of dialogues will culminate in a hybrid event, where the results of the dialogues will be presented, and the recommendations obtained will be discussed with decision-makers from both regions.

Expected results

- Open dialogue promoted between representatives of networks, civil society organisations, the private sector, academia and public institutions in LAC and the EU to make innovative practices and solutions visible and identify common obstacles and opportunities;
- A document systematising the results of the dialogues held that offers recommendations for the design or improvement of public policies and bi-regional EU-LAC cooperation programmes on climate action that promote gender equality;
- Delivery and discussion of the results of the dialogues held with decision-makers in LAC and the EU about interventions to strengthen bi-regional cooperation

programs aimed at increasing the capacity to respond to climate change and the risk of gender-transforming disasters.

Languages

The dialogues will be conducted in the two working languages of the EU-LAC Foundation - Spanish and English, for which simultaneous interpretation services will be made available.