



EU-LAC Foundation  
Fundación EU-LAC



## CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

**Elaboration of a comparative analysis focusing on rural women in Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean and their contributions to food security and adaptation to climate-related risks and natural disasters**

**2025**

***Information for applicants***



Co-financiado por  
la Unión Europea

## 1. Background

The partnership between the countries of the European Union (EU), Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) has its roots in various historical, political, economic, social and cultural ties, and is based on shared interests, values and aspirations among their societies, such as the pursuit of sustainable and inclusive development. Over the years, the two regions have progressively built a relationship that promotes mutual respect and open dialogue. In 1999, the bi-regional strategic partnership was established, providing a consensual and evolving framework for political dialogue and cooperation in specific areas of mutual interest.

On this basis, in 2010, by decision of the Heads of State and Government, the **European Union-Latin America and Caribbean International Foundation (EU-LAC Foundation)** was created, which since 2011 has been operating in the city of Hamburg, Germany, as an instrument to promote this bi-regional association. Through the EU-LAC Women's International Network (EU-LAC WIN Network), the EU-LAC Foundation creates a multidisciplinary, pluralistic and informal space that connects women from countries in the European Union and Latin America and the Caribbean. The Network promotes dialogue and the exchange of experiences around the implementation of three lines of action: climate action, comprehensive care systems, and women's political leadership.

The regions of the European Union and Latin America and the Caribbean have been collaborating on various aspects of sustainable development, including climate action and food security, as fundamental pillars in building resilient and more equitable societies. During the last EU-CELAC Summit in 2023, authorities from both regions reaffirmed this shared commitment:

- ***“We will reinforce our dialogue and foster extensive people-to-people contacts. We reaffirm that by working together as sovereign partners, we are stronger and better placed to face the multiple crises and challenges of our times including food insecurity, poverty, inequalities in both regions, supply chain disruptions, and rising inflation. We will also cooperate to mitigate the adverse effects of climate change and environmental degradation, according to the principle of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, in the light of different national circumstances”*** (paragraph 3)
- ***“We commit to strengthening our biregional cooperation for the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda and will join forces to support the UN Secretary General in his efforts to reinvigorate multilateralism and ensure an effective and accelerated implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We will work to enhance cooperation and coordination, in relevant multilateral fora on issues of common interest, including human rights, labour rights, climate change and biodiversity loss, food and energy security, addressing and countering the world drug problem and organised crime, migration, health, digitalisation and taxation.”*** (paragraph 17).

Given its strategic importance in a global context marked by conflicts, uncertain trade dynamics and extreme weather events, food security will continue to play a vital role in the discussions at the CELAC-EU Summit scheduled for 9 and 10 November in Santa Marta, Colombia. For example, alongside health, green transition, energy integration, critical raw materials and digital infrastructure, food security is one of the strategic issues to be addressed at the LAC-EU Business Forum 2025, convened by the European Union, the Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean (CAF) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) in Santa Marta.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See: <https://www.cancilleria.gov.co/newsroom/news/colombia-lidera-agenda-historica-preparacion-iv-cumbre-celac-ue-realizara-santa-marta>



## 2. Sustainable Development, Food Security, and Rural Women

As the Earth's climate continues to change, its influence on extreme weather events around the world is growing. Heat waves on land and in the oceans, heavy rainfall, severe flooding, prolonged droughts, massive forest fires, and widespread hurricane-related flooding are becoming more frequent and severe.

Since the Industrial Revolution, human activities, especially the burning of fossil fuels, have caused a sharp increase in greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere. Gases such as carbon dioxide and methane trap heat by forming a kind of insulating layer, causing the planet to warm up. This rise in temperature increases average air and ocean temperatures, disrupting water and wind cycles, changing weather patterns and accelerating the melting of land ice, all of which contribute to more extreme weather conditions.

Adverse climatic events, together with political instability or economic factors (unemployment, rising food prices) can negatively affect food security. According to the concept used at the 1996 World Food Summit, 'food security' exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their daily energy needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. The concept, according to organisations such as the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO)<sup>2</sup> or the World Bank<sup>3</sup>, includes four primordial dimensions:

- The physical availability of food;
- Economic and physical access to food;
- The utilisation of food; and
- Stability over time of the three dimensions above

In order to speak of food security, all four dimensions must be fulfilled simultaneously.

At the same time, certain current food production practices represent a significant part of the problem. Recent estimates indicate that the global food system is responsible for about one-third of greenhouse gas emissions, surpassed only by the energy sector. In addition, it is the main source of methane emissions and biodiversity loss.<sup>4</sup>

The varying impacts of these phenomena in different regions of the world have not only led to critical reflections on how food systems have evolved, but also to the development of practices and policies that seek to transform these systems into more sustainable structures that are better adapted to local ecosystems and territories.

In this context, rural women play a significant role in the conservation, use and management of natural resources, through their role as producers, consumers and educators. In particular, through the use of traditional or ancestral knowledge and agroecological practices adapted to local ecosystems, rural women are key actors in driving the economic, environmental and social changes necessary to move towards sustainable development.

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<sup>2</sup> See: FAO. (2006). Food Security. FAO Policy Brief Issue 2, June 2006. Available at:

[https://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/faoitaly/documents/pdf/pdf\\_Food\\_Security\\_Cocept\\_Note.pdf](https://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/faoitaly/documents/pdf/pdf_Food_Security_Cocept_Note.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> See: World Bank. (n.d.). What is Food Security? Available at:

<https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/agriculture/brief/food-security-update/what-is-food-security>

<sup>4</sup> World Bank. (17 octubre 2022). "What You Need to Know about Food Security and Climate Change".

Available at: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2022/10/17/what-you-need-to-know-about-food-security-and-climate-change>



However, the challenges and discriminatory biases that rural women face in their communities have also intensified due to factors such as climate change, political crises, and economic inequalities. Empowering rural women is not only urgent from a rights perspective, but also essential to ensuring the production of resources that promote the well-being of individuals, families, communities, and our societies as a whole.

In this context, it is worth noting that since the 1960s, the rural population in the European Union has been declining, from an average of 41% in 1960 to an average of 24% in 2024.<sup>5</sup> Meanwhile, in Latin America and the Caribbean, there has been an even more notable decrease from an average of 51% (1960) to 18% (2024)<sup>6</sup>. Despite representing 43% of the global agricultural workforce, less than 15% of women own land.<sup>7</sup> In the case of the European Union, women living in rural areas make up less than 50% of the total rural population, 45% of the economically active population, and around 40% of them work in family farming businesses<sup>8</sup>. However, these data do not take into account the informal rural economy, and it should be noted that rural women often face more difficult access to public services such as childcare, health services, and services for the elderly, as well as lower participation in decision-making spaces compared to rural men.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, 40% of women over the age of 15 living in rural areas have no income of their own.<sup>9</sup> In 2020, around 46% of rural women found themselves in situations of extreme poverty.<sup>10</sup> Depending on their location, land ownership by rural women in Latin America ranged from 7.8% to 30.8%.<sup>11</sup> Similarly, women face barriers to accessing bank accounts, productive resources and markets, all of which ultimately translate into low incomes.<sup>12</sup> With declining crop yields in regions affected by climate change, the burden on women in agricultural and domestic tasks has grown, and in some cases, reduced purchasing power has forced them to migrate in search of better living conditions for their families.<sup>13</sup>

Despite these challenges, women play an important role in the economic growth of rural areas. They contribute to maintaining the vitality of rural areas and communities, as well as the viability of crops and agricultural enterprises<sup>14</sup>. In Europe, progress has been made in developing

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<sup>5</sup> World Bank. (n.d.). Rural population (% of the total population). European Union. Available at: <https://datos.bancomundial.org/indicador/SP.RUR.TOTL.ZS?locations=EU>

<sup>6</sup> World Bank. (n.d.). Rural population (% of the total population). Latin America and the Caribbean. Available at: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicador/SP.RUR.TOTL.ZS?locations=ZJ>

<sup>7</sup> OECD. (2024). “Harnessing the green and digital transitions for gender equality: Policy insights from the 2024 OECD Forum on Gender Equality”, OECD Public Governance Policy Papers, No. 61, OECD Publishing, Paris. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1787/860d0901-en>.

<sup>8</sup> GRASS CEILING. (2024). Community-led innovation and the consideration in the LTVRA. Grass Ceiling Project. <https://www.grassceiling.eu/community-led-innovation-and-the-consideration-in-the-ltvra/>

<sup>9</sup> FAO. (2017). “Atlas de las Mujeres Rurales de América Latina: Al tiempo de la vida y los hechos”. Available at: <https://lac-conocimientos-sstc.ifad.org/es/w/atlas-de-las-mujeres-rurales-de-am%C3%A9rica-latina-y-el-caribe-%C2%A8al-tiempo-de-la-vida-y-los-hechos%C2%A8-1>

<sup>10</sup> CEPALSTAT. (2023). Database and Statistics Publications. Available at: <https://statistics.cepal.org/portal/cepalstat/dashboard.html?lang=en>

<sup>11</sup> See footnote 4.

<sup>12</sup> FAO. (2019). Rural women, social protection and food security in LAC. 2030 – Food, agriculture and rural development in Latin America and the Caribbean, No. 23. Available at: <https://www.fao.org/family-farming/detail/es/c/1374741/>

<sup>13</sup> OECD. (2024). “Harnessing the green and digital transitions for gender equality. Policy insights from the 2024 Forum on Gender Equality”. [https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/harnessing-the-green-and-digital-transitions-for-gender-equality\\_860d0901-en.html](https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/harnessing-the-green-and-digital-transitions-for-gender-equality_860d0901-en.html)

<sup>14</sup> European Evaluation Society. (29 November 2021). “Women in rural development: Integrating a gender dimension into policies for rural areas in Europe”. <https://europeanevaluation.org/2021/11/29/women-in-rural-development-integrating-a-gender-dimension-into-policies-for-rural-areas-in-europe/>



frameworks and policies that seek to recognise and strengthen the role of rural women through recent reforms such as the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) 2023–2027, which incorporates a more decisive focus on gender equality.<sup>15</sup> There are promising initiatives such as the EU-CAP Network ‘Women-led innovations in agriculture and rural areas’<sup>16</sup> or the FLIARA project (*Female-Led Innovation in Agriculture and Rural Areas*)<sup>17</sup> which point to an institutional shift towards promoting sustainable innovations, fostering the reduction of persistent gaps in participation in decision-making processes and strengthening support networks and knowledge exchange, among other things.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, which does not have common regulatory and institutional frameworks such as the European CAP, international organisations such as the FAO and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), as well as financial institutions such as the IDB and CAF, collect data, provide analyses, finance projects and train public actors in order to raise awareness of the situation of the rural population, propose measures and public policies to guarantee fundamental rights, and promote food security and environmental protection.<sup>18</sup>

### 3. Call for applications

With the aim of gaining a deeper insight into the transformative role of rural women in building sustainable and resilient food systems from a comparative EU-LAC perspective, and in response to its institutional mandate to offer genuine contributions to strengthen bi-regional cooperation in areas of shared interest to both regions, the EU-LAC Foundation, through the EU-LAC Women's International Network, is launching the following call for proposals inviting individuals and/or teams of experts on the subject matter from both regions to submit proposals for a comparative analysis that seeks to highlight, systematise and assess initiatives and good practices led by women in rural areas in Latin America and the Caribbean and Europe to increase food security and enhance the resilience of these communities to the effects of phenomena such as global warming and biodiversity loss.

#### 3.1. Specific objectives of the analysis

The analysis should focus on:

- Identification, systematisation and comparison of approximately 6 to 8 projects, initiatives and good practices managed by networks, collectives, cooperatives, associations or

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<sup>15</sup> See: [https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/common-agricultural-policy/cap-overview/cap-glance\\_en](https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/common-agricultural-policy/cap-overview/cap-glance_en)

<sup>16</sup> EU CAP Network. (n.d.). “EU CAP Network workshop – Women-led innovations in agriculture and rural areas”. [https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/publications/eu-cap-network-workshop-women-led-innovations-agriculture-and-rural-areas\\_en](https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/publications/eu-cap-network-workshop-women-led-innovations-agriculture-and-rural-areas_en)

<sup>17</sup> FLIARA. (n.d.). “FLIARA: Female-Led Innovation in Agriculture and Rural Areas”. <https://fliara.eu/>

<sup>18</sup> See, for example: UNDP, FAO, RED-LAC. (2023). “Las voces de las mujeres rurales en América Latina y el Caribe ante las crisis multidimensionales”. Available at: <https://www.undp.org/es/latin-america/publicaciones/las-vozes-de-las-mujeres-rurales-en-america-latina-y-el-caribe-ante-las-crisis-multidimensionales>; Brito Bruno, C. and Ivanovic Willumsen, C. (2019). *Mujeres rurales, protección social y seguridad alimentaria en ALC. 2030 - Alimentación, agricultura y desarrollo rural en América Latina y el Caribe*, No. 23. Santiago de Chile. FAO. Available at:

<https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/c25408e4-860e-47f2-bfe4-e533966fbf3d/content>; Maja Schilling & Nicolas Pazos. (2022). *Tierra y empoderamiento: La importancia de la propiedad femenina de la tierra para la seguridad alimentaria*. BID. Available at:

<https://blogs.iadb.org/sostenibilidad/es/tierra-y-empoderamiento-la-importancia-de-la-propiedad-femenina-de-la-tierra-para-la-seguridad-alimentaria/>



organisations of rural women in different rural geographical areas by region – 3 to 4 cases in the European Union and another 3 to 4 cases in Latin America and the Caribbean – that focus on increasing food security in their communities and contribute to the sustainable use and management of natural resources, ecosystem conservation, and/or adaptation to adverse climate phenomena.

- Include in the comparative analysis the ways in which rural women exercise political and community leadership – for example, through their strategies, knowledge transfer, and alliances – addressing challenges, gaps, and ways to overcome them. It is suggested that the concept of ‘women's autonomy’ in its three interrelated dimensions – physical autonomy, economic autonomy, and autonomy in decision-making<sup>19</sup> – be used in the analysis as a relevant element in achieving equality as a human right and a precondition for women to act as changemakers.
- Develop ideas on how to establish closer dialogue and interaction between initiatives and experiences such as those identified in this comparative analysis, bearing in mind that there are currently few bi-regional exchange channels and platforms for networks, collectives, cooperatives and associations of women in rural areas in Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean.
- Propose specific recommendations, based on the experiences and lessons learned identified in the comparative analysis, to guide the design and strengthening of cooperation actions and programmes within the framework of the EU-CELAC Strategic Partnership, which have the potential to contribute to the empowerment of rural women, the transformation of food systems and the well-being of our societies as a whole.

### 3.2. Applicant profile and eligibility criteria

To participate in this call for applications,

- Individual applicants or teams of applicants may participate in the call for proposals. In other words, proposals from individual or collective authors will be accepted;
- Each applicant may submit a maximum of one proposal;
- Applicants must be nationals of one of the 60 member states of the EU-LAC Foundation;
- Applicants must demonstrate their knowledge of the subject matter of the call for proposals, either through a track record of consultancy work, membership of a network, association, cooperative or civil society organisation, or a scientific/academic/research institution based in one of the member countries of the European Union or one of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean.
- In the case of teams composed of two or more applicants, a bi-regional composition of team members will be valued (i.e., persons who are citizens of a European country and persons who are citizens of a Latin American or Caribbean country), although this condition alone does not guarantee a favourable decision.
- Applicants must be able to write the study in British English or Spanish.
- Current employees, interns, and consultants of the EU-LAC Foundation are not eligible to participate in this call for applications.

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<sup>19</sup> This concept was established by ECLAC: <https://oig.cepal.org/en/autonomies/description>



### 3.3. Required application documents

The documentation to be submitted for consideration for this call must be written in English or Spanish and consists of:

- **Application form**
- **Detailed outline of the proposal (max. 3 pages)**
- **Curriculum Vitae (one per applicant)**

The documentation must be sent in PDF or MS Word format.

Proposals will be evaluated anonymously. To ensure the integrity of anonymous evaluations, applicants should not include any personal information (names, email addresses, institutional affiliations) in the detailed proposal summary document. This information should only be provided on the application form and CV, which will be reviewed separately.

Proposals that are submitted after the deadline, are incomplete, or do not meet the conditions set out in these terms of reference will not be accepted.

**The deadline for submitting proposals is 30 September 2025 (23:59 CEST).** Each applicant may submit only one proposal. Proposals received within this period and that meet the requirements will be considered for evaluation in accordance with the rules of this Call for Proposals.

Proposals should be sent to Dr Anna Barrera (EU-LAC Foundation):

Email: [call@eulacfoundation.org](mailto:call@eulacfoundation.org)

with the subject line: **EU-LAC Call for Proposals: Rural Women and Food Security**

### 3.4. Evaluation criteria

The proposals will be evaluated by an evaluation committee made up of the EU-LAC Foundation and experts who are members of the EU-LAC International Women's Network.

The members of the evaluation committee will evaluate the entries based on the following criteria:

- **Quality of the proposal (40%)**
  - Theoretical-conceptual suitability of the proposal
  - Comparative analysis methodology
  - Feasibility of the proposal (can the project be carried out within the proposed timeline of the call for proposals?)
- **Relevance of the proposal (30%)**
  - Linking the content of the comparative analysis to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and women's human rights
  - Relevance of the research project to the EU-CELAC bi-regional agenda
  - Originality of the proposal
  - Transferability of the potential results of the analysis to political practice
- **Applicant(s) qualifications (20%)**
  - Demonstrable knowledge and previous specialised work experience related to the subject of this call for applications.



- Previous experience in conducting comparative analyses related to the subject matter of this call for proposals in Europe and/or Latin America and the Caribbean.
- **Bi-regional composition and gender diversity in applicant teams (10%)**
  - In the case of a team of applicants, its bi-regional composition (European Union – Latin America and the Caribbean) will be considered an advantage.
  - In the case of a team of applicants, the diversity of the team members (gender, age, ethnicity, etc.) will be taken into account.

The proposal that obtains the highest score, based on the combined scores of the members of the evaluation committee, will be selected.

### 3.5. Communication of results

The EU-LAC Foundation anticipates a response time of approximately one (1) month to systematise and evaluate the proposals received under this call. Please do not contact the EU-LAC Foundation regarding your application during this period.

**The results of this call for proposals are expected to be announced on 31 October 2025** on the EU-LAC Foundation's website. The selected person/team will also be contacted by email.

### 3.6. Signing of the service contract

After receiving notification of the selection of their proposal, the selected individual or team of applicants for this call will sign a service contract with the EU-LAC Foundation to carry out the analysis.

- In the event that an individual is selected to carry out the analysis, the EU-LAC Foundation will sign a contract with that individual or with the institution with which that individual is affiliated (e.g. a university institution or civil society organisation with legal personality).
- If a team composed of two or more people is selected in the call for proposals, the contract will be signed with the institution to which the person coordinating the authors is affiliated. The institution of the person coordinating the study will be responsible for organising the distribution of the respective parts of the total amount among the team members; the EU-LAC Foundation will not assume any responsibility in this regard.

### 3.7. Research project schedule and characteristics

A period of four (4) months is anticipated for the preparation of a first draft of the study in English or Spanish (mid-November 2025 – mid-March 2026).

In mid-April 2026, the draft analysis will be submitted for discussion in a webinar composed of experts on the subject, including researchers, consultants, and representatives of organisations specialising in the field, as well as decision-makers from the LAC and EU regions.

The authors of the comparative analysis will then have up to four (4) weeks (until 15 May 2026) to prepare the final version of the analysis, paying due attention to the comments received during the virtual forum and other observations made by the EU-LAC Foundation.



The final work must be submitted to the EU-LAC Foundation in English or Spanish. The text must be submitted in an MS Word document, using Calibri font, size 11, with 1.5 line spacing and normal margins (2.5 cm for the top and bottom margins and 3 cm for the left and right margins). The document must include an 'executive summary' and a section presenting 'recommendations' that can be presented to decision-makers. The total number of words (including spaces, excluding the bibliography) should not exceed 50,000.

If the final work meets the requirements, in accordance with the quality criteria established in the contract, the EU-LAC Foundation will proceed to translate the work into the corresponding working language (Spanish or English) and publish it.

The authors of the comparative analysis will grant the EU-LAC Foundation the original publication rights to the final work.

The views and contents of the comparative analysis will be the responsibility of the authors and not reflect the views of the EU-LAC Foundation or any of its members.

### **3.8. Amount of the study**

The proposal that receives the highest evaluation from the evaluation committee will be awarded a total amount of €6,000.00 (six thousand euros), including any taxes or fees payable by the author(s) of the comparative analysis.

Payment will be made in three instalments: 30% upon signing the service contract with the winners, 40% upon delivery of the draft study, and a third instalment of 20% upon delivery of the final work, following a review process and the transfer of publication rights to the EU-LAC Foundation by the author(s). Each payment may only be made upon delivery of a valid invoice or formal 'payment request' signed by the service provider, i.e., the author of the comparative analysis (or the person coordinating the team, if applicable).

## **4. Data protection**

The EU-LAC Foundation undertakes to keep all personal data strictly confidential and to comply with European Union regulations governing the protection of citizens' data (GDPR).

For their part, the author(s) shall undertake, by means of a declaration of honour, to guarantee the originality of the text.

## **5. Miscellaneous clarifications**

The call for applications may be declared void.

The selection decision of the evaluation committee shall be irrevocable and final.

Any issues not addressed in these rules shall be resolved by the organising institution.

