

Toward *Buen Vivir* with Gender Equality and Environmental Justice

Gender Analysis of the Sustainable Development Goals in Five Countries in Latin America





Environmental Educators without Borders (Grupo Educadores Ambientais Sem Fronteiras, GEASF)

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Summary of the Women2030 LAC Gender Assessment Report

Global Forest Coalition (GFC) member organizations in Latin America, Africa, and Asia have conducted gender assessments in the communities that they work in based on processes of recognizing, understanding, and addressing the causes of gender injustice in rural, forest, and Indigenous communities.

Through analysing gender-disaggregated data, we wish to not only expose the current inequalities in communities, but also provide evidence-based recommendations to help decision-makers assess the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) on the ground.

This report presents the results of gender assessments carried out by five organizations in Latin America: Fundaexpresión in Colombia, HEÑOI in Paraguay, Colectivo VientoSur in Chile, CIPCA in Bolivia, and MUPAN in Brazil. With support from the Global Forest Coalition through the Women2030 program, these five organizations are implementing capacity-building and women's empowerment, communication, outreach, and advocacy projects to defend the rights of women and vulnerable populations at the

local, national, regional, and international levels.

The gender assessments aim to assess progress towards SDGs 1, 2, 5, 6, 13, and 15. Data was collected through interviewing individuals and groups in the communities according to a participatory methodology framed in an intercultural and gender-responsive approach. The results and discussions of the gender assessments are presented here in four chapters. The first chapter deals with the different existing national policies and international agreements and instruments on gender equality. The second chapter analyses the economic, social, and cultural barriers women (and men) face to making legal instruments truly effective in relation to the six SDGs listed above and prioritized by the Women2030 program. Chapter three examines the work that women's groups engage in to cope

with the different gender barriers they face, and the sustainable alternatives to the dominant patriarchal capitalist paradigm they create in order to achieve mutual coexistence between people and nature—a notion known in Spanish as *buen vivir* or “living well”. Finally, chapter four presents the conclusions and recommendations of the gender assessments.

While all five organizations work in unique local contexts, the results of the gender assessments indicate that the gender injustices faced by women in all their diversity and in rural, forest, and Indigenous communities involve common patterns of differentiation, and gender hierarchies based on persistent patriarchal practices. These practices are deeply-rooted in colonial, extractivist, and capitalist models. One of the common denominators emerging from the



Women2030 project, Paraguay. Susana Balbuena

gender assessments is the widespread violence faced by women in its various and interconnected forms: domestic, political, and structural. This violence is disproportionately directed towards Indigenous and Afro-descendant women from rural communities and marginalized urban areas, and levels of femicide are increasing in each country (see section 4.4), despite the fact that on paper there has been progress in implementing national laws and international agreements to eradicate all forms of violence against women (see section 3.1)¹. At the same time, growing violations of human and environmental rights at the hands of extractive industries (such as commercial tree plantations, unsustainable livestock and feedstock farming, and mining), have a particularly dramatic effect on women in rural, forest, and Indigenous communities. Unlike domestic violence, these rights violations are promoted and protected by international trade agreements and national laws designed to boost economic growth.

Specifically, the gender assessments demonstrate the different structural barriers that women face to “living well” due to gender inequality and environmental injustice. These barriers include:

- *Limited access to land and other productive resources.* Except for Bolivia, where female access to land is around 47% in the Altiplano- La Paz and 52% in Cochabamba Valley, in Colombia, only 8% of women interviewed own land,



- versus 17% in Paraguay, and an overage of 40% in Chile (Indigenous Mapuche communities). Increasing dispossession of land and forests due to incursions for extractive industries makes access to land even more critical for women.
- *Failure to value the reproductive work performed by women in their families and communities.* Although ultimately this work sustains the patriarchal capitalist system, national statistics often group women under the categories of ‘inactive’, ‘not working’, or ‘does not contribute to the family economy’.
- *Failure to value and fully recognize women's contributions to the maintenance of sustainable agri-food systems, even though many of these are led by women.* 31.7% in Chile, 25% in Bolivia, and 18.7% in Brazil.
- *Lack of women's participation in public office, despite new policies and quotas designed to increase it.* One exception is Bolivia, where the percentage of women elected to serve in departmental assemblies increased from 27.6% to 45.5%

between 2010 and 2015.

- *Widespread perception that the negative impacts of climate change are the same for men and women.* This is counterproductive when planning and developing resilience policies. In practice, women interviewed indicate that they are more affected by increasing water scarcity and food insecurity, and forced migration.
- *Women's participation in decision-making and consultation processes is limited, especially at the national level.* While it is recognized that women play decisive roles in the conservation and management of biodiversity and forest ecosystems, their exclusion from decision-making makes it easier for extractive industries to continue harming forests and biodiversity, often in the name of ‘sustainable management’.

One of the conclusions highlighted in the gender assessments is that increasing numbers of women's organizations and environmental movements believe that gender and environmental justice are key to achieving the SDGs. It is recognized that the climate crisis,

¹ Relevant initiatives and institutions include: the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW); Beijing Platform for Action; ILO Convention 169; Agenda 2030; Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women (Convention of Belém do Pará); Latin American Committee for the Defence of Women's Rights (CLADEM); Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR).

social injustices, and gender-based violence—and, more recently, pandemics—are directly related to deforestation, extractive industries, and the current patriarchal modes of production and consumption.

It is also recognized, at least at the local level, that women are not only victims of structural and climate injustice, but also protagonists who are assuming leadership roles and developing sustainable local alternatives to achieve *buen vivir* (living well). However, voluntary national reviews² (VNRs) of individual countries' progress towards achieving the SDGs do not reflect this. Much progress would be made toward achieving sustainable development if UN organizations were to pay more attention to and support local initiatives for *buen vivir* developed by women's organizations and Indigenous and forest communities.

The key recommendations are:

- All forms of violence against women, girls, and Indigenous peoples must be urgently eradicated, including an end to the persecution, violence, and murder of environmental leaders. More effective laws must be established at the local level that punish not only the perpetrators of violence, but also the institutions (courts, police, and other bodies) that enable the perpetrators.
- There is a need to halt megaprojects and the expansion of extractive industries in the five countries featured in this report and demand the demilitarization of Indigenous communities and territories. Governments and banks must be urged to stop subsidizing destructive industries, which disproportionately impact women by harming livelihoods, cultural identity and climate

resilience, and by destroying forests and other biodiverse ecosystems.

- The United Nations should not be complacent when it comes to the VNR process; parallel work is required between superstructures and communities to specifically address local needs and support the alternative responses that women and their organizations are developing to achieve gender justice and in pursuit of *buen vivir* (living well). Such an approach would contribute to achieving a number of SDGs through strengthening the vital role that women play in forest conservation, biodiversity protection, and climate mitigation at the local level.

² Voluntary National Reviews are reports that serve to monitor and review the implementation of the SDGs. Countries are required to submit them to the UN High-Level Political Forum each year.



Women2030 project, Brazil. GEASF

1. GFC and the Women2030 program

The Global Forest Coalition (GFC) is an international coalition of NGOs and Indigenous Peoples' Organizations defending social justice and the rights of forest peoples in forest policies. As a feminist organization, gender equality and women's rights in forest conservation and forest-related policies is a key component of GFC's campaigns.

Through the Women2030 program, GFC members and forest communities are addressing gender-responsive forest conservation, sustainable development, and women's rights in several ways. Many of these women's groups and communities are defending their forests against harmful development projects and policies, unsustainable industries, failing local governance, and state discrimination against Indigenous Peoples, which threaten their forests, territories, food sovereignty, and livelihoods. Members are working with Indigenous Peoples and local communities to mobilize and build the capacity of women's groups in the field of forest conservation and sustainable development in general, as well as to support the

development of women- and community-led solutions and initiatives to address threats created by the structural, environmental, and gender inequalities being faced. This has included, for example, supporting women in local communities to build their own sustainable livelihoods and strengthening the dialogue on SDGs, patriarchy, gender equality, and women's rights in communities.

Community-level gender assessments play a significant role in analyzing the perceptions and recommendations of both women and men in communities on various topics including climate change impacts, biodiversity conservation, land rights, and division of labour. Such

community-generated, gender-disaggregated data is crucial for understanding the gender-differentiated experiences in communities and capturing the realities on the ground. These findings and recommendations can therefore be used to hold policy-makers accountable and foster more appropriate and just sustainable development and forest policies. In the Women2030 program, GFC has maintained a focus on Latin America, where its members and allies have carried out several gender assessments. This document presents the assessments performed by our member organizations in Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, and Paraguay.

2. Participating organizations and the context of the communities involved

During the implementation of the gender assessments, one aspect of the political context of the five countries that stood out was the emergence of 'nationalist' authoritarian governments (ultra-right-wing administrations in Brazil, Chile, and Paraguay, and leftist ones in Bolivia and Colombia).

These governments appear to prioritize economic development based on megaprojects and extractive industries (with growing militarization) that destroy forests and biodiversity. For example, in August 2019, 30,901 forest fires were reported in the Amazon region³, nearly three times as many as in the same period in

2018. These fires were closely linked to the expansion of large-scale livestock production, which is being encouraged in all five countries. In Bolivia, according to the environmental group *Fundación Amigos de la Naturaleza*, forest fires, particularly in the central area of Santa Cruz de la Sierra, exceeded

3.8 million hectares by September 2019. In Paraguay, particularly in the northern part of the country, at least 600 blazes were counted.

Below are descriptions of the five organizations that led gender assessments in each country:

Fundaexpresión, Colombia

Fundaexpresión is a cultural and environmental civil society organization that helps various local communities with the purpose of strengthening the self-management capacity of peasant families, urban dwellers, women's groups, youth organizations, and grassroots organizations. Its work is part of the organizational process of the Collective of Peasant and Community Reserves of Santander, which is based on

the conservation of forests, biodiversity, and water as common goods. Contributing to the process is the work of five peasant organizations and 415 rural families.

In relation to the Women2030 program, Fundaexpresión carried out a gender assessment in north-eastern Colombia in the department of Santander, specifically in three rural

communities in the municipalities of Lebrija, Matanza, and Suratá. It also implemented capacity-building projects through subgrants to the following women's organizations: AMMUCALE, ASOVIVIR, and *Centro Comunitario de Capacitación Apícola*.

Colombia has endured more than 60 years of internal violence. Although the peace agreement with the FARC guerrilla group was a very important event⁴, several armed actors and criminal groups linked to drug trafficking continue to operate in different parts of the territory, a situation that has prevented peace among the Colombian population and hindered the management and conservation of local biodiversity and forests. Colombia is one of the so-called megadiverse countries, which have the highest biodiversity on Earth.

The festival of taste advocates for food sovereignty and women's rights, Colombia. **Fundaexpresión**



³ <https://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias-america-latina-49811380>

⁴ On September 26, 2016, a peace agreement was signed between the government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC).

Centro de Estudios y Promoción de la Democracia, los Derechos Humanos, y de la Sostenibilidad Ambiental, HEÑOI, Paraguay

HEÑOI carries out activities involving research, training, awareness-raising, and support for the actions undertaken by the social and political movements of Paraguay that demand or promote human rights; expand citizen participation; strengthen public institutions and community organization; and promote socio-economic and environmental sustainability. Its activities prioritize the development of a critical citizenry in the construction of an equitable, solidarity-based society that is respectful of human rights and nature. Since 2017, it has worked closely with Indigenous and peasant women in the *Federación Nacional Campesina (FNC)* and *Coordinadora Nacional de Organizaciones de Mujeres Trabajadoras Rurales e Indígenas (CONAMURI)* to enhance their advocacy capacity in the defence and protection of forests and biodiversity within their communities through actions promoting social, political, and economic empowerment.

As part of the Women2030 program, HEÑOI conducted gender assessments at two sites: Comité Nueva Esperanza, a rural community in Santory, Distrito Repatriación, Departamento Caaguazú; and Asentamiento



Community meeting in Paraguay. Inés Franceschelli

Patria Nueva, Distrito Itaugua, Departamento Central. The *asentamiento* is managed by women, many of whom are single mothers, and is an urban/peri-urban community that continues to fight for ownership of its land. HEÑOI has also implemented subgrants with the following women's organizations: CONAMURI, FNC, and CULTIVA. As a result of this work, a photo essay was published entitled *"They are only interested in soy": how peasant and Indigenous women in Paraguay are organising to survive the twin threats of industrial agriculture and climate change*⁵.

Paraguay is a landlocked country historically subjected to successive waves of colonialism that turned the country into a source of agricultural raw materials, a situation that endures today.

Genetically-modified soy and corn monocultures, unsustainable livestock production, and more recently rice and eucalyptus monocultures, have converted the countryside into a wasteland (particularly the eastern region) and rural peasant and Indigenous populations into pariahs on their own land. In this scenario, peasant and Indigenous women are the direct victims of exclusion and condemnation; they continue to bear nearly all the responsibility for family care tasks⁶ and increasingly take on productive tasks (both on their farms and as domestic workers or in the service industry). Women in peri-urban and urban areas also face the challenge of supporting their families without the educational or practical training necessary to obtain salaried employment.

⁵ Available here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SV8Qrg_jwVo&t=6s

⁶ In Paraguay in 2016, women spent 43.4 hours per week caring for children, the elderly, and members of the household in situations of dependence, compared to 27.8 hours per week for men. They also spent 12.9 hours per week on domestic chores, compared to 6.2 hours per week for men (DGEEC, 2016).

Colectivo VientoSur, Chile

Colectivo VientoSur is a multidisciplinary political organization without any party or religious affiliation that is horizontal in structure and works holistically to support resistance and territorial claims. It fights for a sustainable and sovereign society through reciprocal and integrated work with urban and rural communities, promoting and accompanying local processes of social and environmental change. The Collective rejects the anthropocentric view that turns nature, people, and common goods into objects of exploitation and commodification. It supports activities that help communities and peoples become aware of their rights, knowledge, and potential to fight for harmonious ways of life within their territories.

As part of the Women2030 program, the Collective has implemented gender assessments and capacity development projects in Mapuche Indigenous communities in southern Chile in the regions of Los Rios and Araucanía, specifically with the *Asociación Comunal de Comunidades Indígenas de Loncoche* and the *Asociación Indígena Trem Trem Mapu* in San José de la Mariquina.

Chile is experiencing difficult times that will likely be decisive for achieving radical change to the current neoliberal socioeconomic system. A clear turning point in the country's history came on October 18, 2019, when, after 46 years of subjugation and resignation, a popular movement led by secondary school students rose up against the injustice, dispossession, and precarious

living conditions created by the dictatorship and deepened by subsequent government administrations. The government responded with excessive violence and systematic human rights violations. The violations and precariousness are seen in multiple areas and are worse among rural and Indigenous communities, including among Mapuche women. In light of extractivist policies and wealth accumulation through dispossession, *"the appropriation and exploitation of nature became the benchmark for oppressing women and girls, particularly among the Indigenous, peasant, Afro-descendant, and migrant populations, through the domination of their bodies and diverse territorialities. Thus, women and nature receive the same treatment... as resources"* (Fernández, 2019).



Trem Trem Mapu association, Chile. Colectivo VientoSur

Centro de Investigación y Promoción del Campesinado, CIPCA, Bolivia

CIPCA is a Bolivian NGO with a national presence. It seeks to contribute to the Indigenous peasant population by defending their rights and territories and their recognition as actors in development with their own voices and proposals. One of the priority issues for CIPCA is to promote and implement gender-equity policies, modify power relations, and contribute to the achievement of equitable relationships between men and women. This challenge arises in light of the need to overcome all situations of marginalization and violence against women to achieve adequate economic, social, political, and cultural development.

CIPCA is the focal point of the Women2030 program in Bolivia and has involved the following organizations in conducting gender assessments and capacity-building projects: *Centro de Capacitación e Investigación de la Mujer Campesina de Tarija* (Tarija Peasant Women's Centre for Training and Research or CCIMCAT), which works in the Chaco region with the Guaraní people of the Department of Tarija; *Sociedad Potosina de Ecología* (Potosí Society for Ecology or SOPE), which works on organizational strengthening in urban and peri-urban neighbourhoods in the city of Potosí; *Plataforma Boliviana Frente al Cambio Climático* (Bolivian Platform Against Climate Change or PBFCC), which works on climate change nationally; and CIPCA itself, which has regional offices in Cochabamba and the Altiplano (highlands) and works with Indigenous peasant populations in rural areas.



Women2030 project in Bolivia. CIPCA



Women2030 project in Bolivia. CIPCA

Mulheres em Ação no Pantanal, MUPAN, Brasil

MUPAN seeks to promote greater participation of women as multipliers of sustainable actions in the context of environmental conservation and strengthen their roles socially, economically, and politically. MUPAN carries out research and training in collaboration with related local and national civil society organizations that work on issues of women's empowerment and leadership, enabling them to participate in spaces of discussion and decision-making in Brazil and other Latin American countries.

Through the Women2030 program, MUPAN has involved the following organizations in the implementation of gender assessments and capacity-building projects: *Centro de Mulheres do Cabo*; *Centro de Trabalhadores da*

Economia Solidária; *Grupo de Educadores Ambientais Sem Fronteiras*; *Instituto de Apoio e Proteção a Pesquisa, Educação e Cultura (IAPPEC)*; and *Associação Movimento Mãe Águia*. All of these organizations are located in the state of Mato Grosso.

Mato Grosso has Brazil's second-highest rate of deforestation, with 17.2%; the highest rate is in the State of Pará in northern Brazil, responsible for 39.5% of the forest loss seen in the Amazon region. These two states, together with Amazonas and Rondonia, represent 84% of the deforestation occurring in Brazil. The interim director of the National Institute for Space Research (INPE, its Portuguese acronym) and the environment minister have reported a rise in

deforestation since 2012, with an average increase of 11.4% per year. However, the Brazilian Amazon has recorded its worst levels of deforestation in more than a decade since the arrival to power of President Jair Bolsonaro in January 2019⁷. Bolsonaro has criticized environmental legislation for hindering economic development in cities in the Amazon. He has also discredited environmental prosecutors, who have been persecuted, and has promoted mining in Indigenous territories. The majority of participants in MUPAN's gender assessment stated that they are Indigenous.

⁷ According to INPE, deforestation in the Amazon increased by 29.5% between 1 August 2018 and 31 July 2019 compared to the previous 12 month period, reaching 9,762 km². It is the highest rate since 2008.



3. National policies regarding women's rights in Latin America

The advancement and implementation of national policies on gender equality in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) is a process that has been developing since the signing of international agreements that commit states to implementing non-discriminatory and more equitable policies between men and women from different social and ethnic spheres.

Social movements, particularly the feminist movement, have played a decisive role in implementing these international agreements in favour of demands for equality and social justice, including environmental and climate justice.

International progress includes the following: (i) The 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), considered the first step in establishing women's rights and committing states to a series of measures to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women, enshrining the principle of equality between women and men and establishing public institutions to ensure its implementation; (ii) The World Conference on Human Rights in 1993, which put an end to the neutral vision of human rights with regard to gender; (iii) The Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing and its Platform for Action (1995), which made extensive commitments in 12 areas that remain relevant priorities 25 years later. These developments constitute a framework of goals for action by states in building more democratic and just societies (ECLAC, 2019).

At the regional level, there are several institutions promoting women's rights, such as the Center for Justice and International Law (CEJIL), the *Comité Latinoamericano para la Defensa*

de los Derechos de la Mujer (CLADEM), and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR). There are also important agreements in this area, including the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women (Convention of Belém do Pará). Because practices of discrimination and exploitation in LAC countries are historically deeply marked by social constructions that interweave ethnic differences and inequities, place of origin, and racial identity, this assessment also looks at the adoption and implementation of International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples.

In principle, the governments of the five countries⁸ included in this

assessment have all signed these international agreements. During the 1990s. Since then, states have carried out different efforts to regulate and implement them, partly in response to commitments made in the framework of achieving the Millennium Development Goals. The most decisive progress in favour of gender equality policies has occurred as of the beginning of the new millennium and the agreements of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This includes policies to eradicate violence against women, promote reproductive rights, obtain legal and equitable access to land, achieve democratic parity, protect rural women, and implement gender equality and opportunity plans, among others.



Women2030 project in Chile. Colectivo Viento-Sur

⁸ Colombia ratified CEDAW in 1982, the Beijing Platform in 1995, ILO Convention 169 in 1991; Bolivia ratified CEDAW in 1990, the Beijing Platform in 1995, ILO Convention 169 in 1991; Brazil ratified CEDAW in 1984, the Beijing Platform in 1995, ILO Convention 169 in 2002; Paraguay ratified CEDAW in 1987 (Law No. 1683) and the Beijing Platform in 1995; Chile ratified CEDAW in 1989 (but only after 18 years, in December 2019, was the optional protocol adopted), ILO Convention 169 in 2009, and the Beijing Platform in 2015.

3.1 Policies and standards regarding the elimination of violence against women

In general, LAC countries have made significant progress in eradicating all forms of violence against women. For a better understanding of these developments, references are provided below for each country in the study.

Colombia: On December 6, 2018, a group of women self-described as #Degeneradas (degenerates) published an analysis in *El Tiempo*⁹ on national standards to halt violence against women and the status of their implementation. The first fact is as follows: “*Law 1257 of 2008 is considered internationally as one of the most complete and comprehensive laws to eliminate violence against women ... Its eight chapters and 39 articles specify the routes and provisions to guarantee a life free from violence toward women*”.

Paraguay: Law No. 5777/16: This law provides comprehensive protection for women against all forms of violence and regulations under Decree No. 6973/2017. It establishes policies and strategies for the prevention of violence against women, mechanisms of care and measures of protection, punishment, and integral reparation, in both the public and private spheres (Article 1). Other important articles are: Article 44, which includes the prohibition of conciliation or mediation in cases of violence; Article 46, which incorporates procedural principles for the denunciation of cases of violence such as authenticity, speed, discretion and duty to report; and Article 50, which

includes femicide as a concept for public criminal action.

Law No. 4675/12: This law elevates to the rank of ministry the Secretariat for Women of the Presidency of the Republic. Its main functions include the development of “plans, projects and standards to eradicate violence against women”.

Law No. 1600/00: Against domestic violence. This law establishes norms for protection for any person who suffers injury or physical, mental or sexual ill-treatment by a member of the family group, which includes that arising from kinship, in marriage or common-law partnership, even if coexistence had ceased, and also in the case of non-cohabiting couples and children, whether or not they are in common.

Chile: The Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women, signed by Chile in 1994 and ratified in 1996, is one of the first international instruments Chile adopted to address violence against women. Chile also ratified the Belém do Pará Convention in 1996.

According to the National Policy on Children and Adolescents for 2015-2025 and its Plan of Action, a number of bills have already been published, such as those regarding the Deputy Secretary for Children, the Office of the Defence of the Rights of the Child and the regulation of video-recorded interviews for victims of sexual assault.

In addition, the Deputy Secretary for Crime Prevention, in conjunction with the national police (Carabineros de Chile), the Investigations Police, the Office of the Prosecutor, the Medical Legal Service, the Gendarmerie of Chile and the Ministry of Women and Gender Equality have begun to develop a homicide observatory to share the information available in each institution and systematize data on homicides in Chile, creating a unified register.

Bolivia: In Bolivia, all forms of discrimination faced by women in the country are addressed in the Political Constitution of the State adopted in February 2009, which includes social and gender equity among the values on which the state is founded, in addition to the general provision on the right of all persons, and in particular women, to life free from violence.

Brazil: Law No. 11340/2006 Maria da Penha¹⁰ recognizes the right of all women to live a life free from violence and considers this type of aggression an attack on women's rights. The law obliges the State and society to protect women from domestic and family violence, regardless of age, class, race, religion, and sexual orientation. The Maria da Penha Law incorporates a new paradigm by recognizing violence against women as a violation of human rights and not as a less serious private crime. This applies the legal regime applicable to human rights violations to violence against women.

⁹ See: <https://www.eltiempo.com/podcast/degeneradas/analisis-de-los-10-anos-de-la-ley-1257-de-2008-de-colombia-sobre-violencia-contra-la-mujer-299462>

¹⁰ Maria da Penha was a Brazilian victim of violence and attempted murder by her husband, who, with the support of the Center for Justice and International Law (CEJIL) and the *Comité Latinoamericano para la Defensa de los Derechos de la Mujer* (CLADEM), took Brazil to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) for failing to take effective measures to prevent and punish violence and for the judiciary's pattern of impunity established in the response to attacks of this kind.

3.2 Policies and regulations regarding access to and ownership of land

Colombia: Only in 1988 were women recognized as bearers of land titling rights, although rural women continue to be excluded from rural property ownership¹¹.

In 2002, the Rural Women's Law (Law No. 731) was enacted to *"guarantee land ownership to women... in addition to other provisions aimed at strengthening their participation in bodies of control, decision-making, territorial and national planning and monitoring that favour the rural sector"*.

Paraguay: The National Constitution (Chapter IX, Section II on Agrarian Reform) and the Agrarian Statute guarantee access to land for all citizens interested in working that land. The Constitution establishes under Article 115 - The Basis for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development, Item 9: "support for peasant women, particularly those who are heads of household". Similarly, item 10 indicates the peasant women's participation in land reform plans on an equal basis with men.

Law No. 5446/15 "On Public Policies for Rural Women" is also a step forward, although critical and independent peasant women's organizations did not have the opportunity to participate in its development. This law has not yet come into force.

Chile: In Chile, no national standards exist that guarantee women's access to land and water, except for the general rules of the civil code on the right to property. The second National Voluntary Report on the SDGs (2019) prepared by the Chilean government shows that the *Agenda Mujer* (Women's Agenda), which is led by the Ministry of Women and Gender Equity, seeks to have an impact on SDG Targets 10.2 and 10.3. This agenda, among other bills related to marital partnership, modifies the Civil Code and other laws, regulating the patrimonial regime of conjugal society and ensuring equal rights between men and women to manage their individual and joint assets.

Bolivia: Bolivia is a country that made early progress on women's access to land ownership, approving the provisions of CEDAW with Law No. 1100 in 1989. Subsequently, in 1996, Law No. 1715 was passed, creating the National Agrarian Reform Service, and applying criteria of equity in the distribution, administration, tenure and use of land for women, regardless of their marital status.

In the case of marriages and domestic partnerships, titles were issued for both spouses or partners working the land, with the woman serving as the first holder. This law (No. 3545) was ratified in 2006. With this

measure, a specific procedure was established to promote the titling of rural property for rural women. Of the total number of titles, which exceed two million, 53% correspond to men, 46% to women, and 2% to legal entities or *Territorios Indígena Originario Campesinos* (Indigenous Peasant Territories).

It should also be noted that, in Bolivia, the Constitution recognizes the collective rights of indigenous and peasant communities to access and use communal lands. In addition, and in accordance with ILO Convention 169 the government recognizes the right of communities to use the natural resources of the territory they occupy.

Brazil: Under Brazil's Civil Code, married women could not legally acquire or possess property until 1962. The right to land for all was enshrined in 1964 with the Land Statute, Law No. 4,504. This statute ensures that everyone can own land, while at the same time respecting the social function of it.

The Federal Constitution of 1988, under Article 5, guarantees everyone the right to be the owner of land, and Article 186 gives the state the responsibility to ensure that the land serves its social function. The constitution defines men and women as equal in their rights and obligations.

¹¹ REVISTA SEMILLAS No. 73/74: Mujeres campesinas sin tierra - rostros de pobreza y exclusión, Eva María Rodríguez Díaz, December 2019. <http://www.semillas.org.co/es/revista/mujeres-campesinas-sin-tierra>

3.3 Policies and regulations regarding political rights and democratic parity

Colombia: The Quota Act, Law No. 581 of 2000, established that 30% of high-level public offices must be held by women. The law governs women's participation in decision-making at various levels of government, including the national, departmental, regional, provincial, district and municipal levels.

Paraguay: A draft law on “Democratic Parity” was introduced in the Senate on March 8, 2016. It was debated and modified by Congress until 2018, and then vetoed by the executive in November of the same year.

Chile: Law No. 20.840, which replaced the binomial electoral system with an inclusive proportional electoral system and strengthened the representativeness of the National Congress (2015), includes a criterion on gender parity and equity according to which neither men nor women may hold more than 60% or less than 40% of the

total number of candidacies presented by a party or list in an electoral territory.

In 2016, the Ministry of Women and Gender Equality began its work with the mission of designing, coordinating, and evaluating policies, plans, and programs to promote gender equity and equal rights and to seek the elimination of all forms of arbitrary discrimination against women (Law No. 20.820).

Bolivia: The People's Participation Act of 1994 was the first step forward, guaranteeing equal opportunities for women and men at the different levels of representation. It also established a duty for *Organizaciones Territoriales de Base* (Grassroots Territorial Organizations) to promote equal access for women at the local level.

A 30% quota for closed lists of parliamentary elections was incorporated into the Electoral

Code in 1997 and extended to municipal elections in 1999. These rules were consolidated in 2001 into a new regulation establishing quotas for the elections of senators, deputies, and councillors. The Law on Citizens' and Indigenous Peoples' Groupings (2004) established the requirement of 50% of women in candidates for popular representation, with gender alternation in the candidate lists.

Bolivia's National Development Plan for 2016-2020 also establishes the goal of a transparent judicial system that guarantees justice for all, including increasing women's participation so that women make up half of judicial authorities.

Brazil: In 1995, there was a legal requirement for a minimum of 20% of candidates in political parties or coalitions to be women, which increased to 30% in 1997, and in 2010, by decision of the Superior Electoral Tribunal, the minimum quota of 30% female candidates in politics was made compulsory.

Processing fruit in Cachirí, Colombia. **Fundaexpresión**



The “society” axis of the National Development Plan (Plan Brasil2030) lists 10 areas of action, one of which is called “women” and includes the objective of ensuring equal participation in the highest levels of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches, eliminating all forms of violence against women and promoting women's comprehensive health and sexual and reproductive rights.

3.4 Policies and standards regarding labour rights and equal opportunities in vocational training

Colombia: Since 2003, Law No. 823 has required the national government to establish measures to promote equal working conditions for women, particularly regarding the principle of equal pay for equal work. On the other hand, Article 9 of Law No. 823 of 2003 stipulates the following: “The state shall ensure women’s access to all academic and professional programs on equal footing with men”.

Paraguay: The 2030 National Development Plan includes a goal of increasing women’s formal labor participation by 75%, putting women on equal terms with men. It also proposes gender equality and the promotion of an integrated gender approach in public policies to achieve equal opportunities and equal treatment between men and women. The cross-cutting issues are equal opportunities throughout the life cycle without discrimination based on gender, ethnicity, place of birth, or family environment; efficient and transparent public management; territorial management; and environmental sustainability.

Chile: Chile’s first equality policy began to be implemented early on compared to the rest of the countries of the region, prior to the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995. Chile’s first Equal Opportunity Plan covered the period 1994-1999. The Plan served as the basis and guiding principle of the work of

the National Service for Women and Gender Equity during those years (Flores 2016)¹².

According to the second National Voluntary Report on SDGs¹³, the Ministry of Labor has worked intensively on labour inclusion and gender equity within the framework of compliance with SDG 8. The ministry seeks to generate a more inclusive labor market that is free from discrimination and in which everyone has opportunities to successfully gain employment.

Regarding equal pay, Law No. 20348 of 2009 on equal pay for men and women amended the Labor Code so that employers comply with the principle of equal pay for men and women performing the same work.

Bolivia: Women’s participation in the workplace has increased in Bolivia in the last decade, however, conditions in most areas remain precarious and informal, with low wages and without health insurance. Meanwhile, progress in the incorporation of women into the labor market is not being accompanied by shared responsibilities for domestic duties, both on the part of men and the state. Over the past decade, women’s increased involvement in economic activity and discrimination in their access to paid work have translated into sustained high rates of unemployment.

Various employment programs have been developed in Bolivia, most of which began in the late 1980s, and they have undergone changes and transformations, in some cases continuing to operate: *Mi Primer Empleo Digno* (2010); *Programa de Certificación de Competencias* (2009); *Plan Nacional de Empleo de Emergencia* (2005); and *Programa contra la Pobreza y Apoyo a la Inversión Solidaria* (2008).

Brazil: In the list of social labor rights, Article 7 of the Federal Constitution of 1988 provides for the protection of the labor market for women through specific incentives under the terms of the law, as well as the prohibition of differentials in wages, the exercise of functions, and criteria for admission based on sex, age, colour, or marital status.

Other labor rights for women include maternity leave (for biological or adopted children), breastfeeding rights, weight-bearing limits, miscarriage leave, and overtime rest.

The National Development Plan (known as Plan Brasil2030) includes as one of its objectives “achieving equal pay between men and women”.

¹² Flores Salazar A (2016) Políticas públicas de igualdad de género en Chile y Costa Rica. Un estudio comparado. Doctoral thesis. Universidad Complutense de Madrid.

¹³ Segundo Informa Nacional de Chile, June 2019. https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/23507Informe_Nacional_Voluntario_CHILE_Junio_2019_final_1.pdf

3.5 Policy instruments regarding gender equality

In addition to gender policies, there are “Gender Equality Instruments” in LAC countries that provide guidelines for governments to link democratic functioning with gender equality. These instruments deal with democratization and equal opportunities together and insist on the responsibility of states to confront inequalities. Of note in

LAC countries are the following gender equality policy instruments: Gender Equality Plans (GEPs), Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) on the SDGs, and National Development Plans (NDPs).

Gender Equality Plans¹⁴, also known as “Equal Opportunity Plans”, are relevant policy and

planning tools that, driven by mechanisms for the advancement of women, account for both the current challenges and commitments of states in this area. Table 1 shows the most recent GEPs in the five countries studied.

Table 1: Gender Equality Policies and Plans in LAC

Country	Year	Name of plan	Entity responsible
Colombia	2013-2016	Indicative Action Plan 2013-2016 of the National Public Policy of Gender Equity for Women	Presidential Advisor for Women's Equity
Paraguay	2008-2017	III National Plan for Equal Opportunity Between Women and Men, 2008-2017	Secretariat for Women of the Presidency of the Republic
Chile	2011-2020	Gender Equality Plan 2011-2020	National Women's Service (SERNAM)
Bolivia	2008	National Plan for Equal Opportunities “Women Building the New Bolivia to Live Well”	Vice Ministry of Gender and Generational Affairs (VGAG), Ministry of Justice
Brazil	2013-2015	III National Policy Plan for Women 2013-2015	Presidency of the Republic Special Secretariat for Policies for Women ¹⁵

Source: ONU-CEPAL 2019

Voluntary National Reports on SDGs or the 2030 Agenda

It is hoped that the VNRs¹⁶ will include in their reports progress on the implementation of SDG 5 and other related SDGs.

In LAC, Colombia, Paraguay, and Chile have submitted their VNRs, while Brazil and Bolivia have not yet done so. Chile has even submitted a second VNR, however, surprisingly, this report does not

make reference to the monitoring of SDG 5. Rather, it reports on progress related to gender equity in monitoring SDGs 4, 8, and 10.

¹⁴ Planes de igualdad de género en América Latina y el Caribe Mapas de ruta para el desarrollo (2019). Observatorio de Igualdad de Género en América Latina y el Caribe. Estudios 1, CEPAL y Cooperación Española. https://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/41014/6/S1801212_es.pdf

¹⁵ In October 2015, this became the Ministry of Women, Racial Equality and Human Rights. In May 2016, it was removed and became the Special Secretariat for Policies for Women, which moved from the Presidency to the Ministry of Justice and Citizenship.

¹⁶ The Voluntary National Reviews aim to monitor the implementation of the SDGs through parliaments and supreme audit institutions in each country.

National Development Plans

Colombia: Colombia's 2014-2018 National Development Plan, called "Everyone for a New Country", is based on three pillars: peace, equity, and education. To achieve this, five cross-cutting strategies are proposed: (i) competitiveness and strategic infrastructure, (ii) transformation of the countryside, (iii) social mobility, (iv) security, justice, and democracy for peace-building, and (v) good governance. Gender is explicitly included in the last three, along with disability, ethnicity, and age.

Paraguay: Paraguay's 2030 National Development Plan has three strategic issues: poverty reduction and social development, inclusive economic growth, and Paraguay's proper insertion in the world. The poverty reduction area considers the protection and promotion of state-guaranteed human and cultural rights, including the equal incorporation of men and women into all areas of development.

Chile: The 2018-2022 National Development Plan, "Let's Build Better Times for Chile", focuses on the well-being of families and seeks to promote and reconcile four key principles: freedom, justice, progress, and solidarity. It includes four fundamental pillars: 1) A freer Chile that achieves progress by creating opportunities

for all, 2) a fair and supportive Chile to walk together, 3) a safe and peaceful Chile to achieve progress and live peacefully, 4) a Chile to a live fuller and happier life. The "Women's Commitment" proposes to *"advance, as a priority, three major challenges: To definitively consolidate equality before the law for women, ending all existing legal discrimination; to generate conditions that contribute to increasing the autonomy of women; and to contribute to a culture of respect for the dignity of women in all areas and to the protection of their lives and integrity, combating unabated domestic violence"*. To this end, the main objectives and measures relate to equal rights, duties, treatment, and participation; autonomy and labour integration; ending violence against women; situations of special vulnerability; respect for the dignity of women; and women as protagonists.

Bolivia: The 2016-2020 Plan for Economic and Social Development in the Framework of Integral Development for *Buen Vivir* includes the following aim: *"to value and reassert the role of women, particularly indigenous women, as the vanguard of the emancipatory struggles of our peoples under the principles of the duality, equality and complementarity of men and*

women". The plan consists of 13 pillars, three of which make direct reference to gender and women. Pillar 1, on the eradication of extreme poverty, addresses confronting violence against women as part of the goal of eradicating spiritual poverty.

Brazil: "Plan Brazil 2020" states, among other developments in different areas, that *"women and men shall be on an equal footing, free from all violence in their economic, political and social activities. It is established that Brazilian men and women—black, white, Asian, Indian and mestizo, without distinction based on religion or belief—shall have the same opportunities for social mobility and economic and political participation"*. By virtue of this view, the "Centenary Goals" are arranged around the issues of economy, society, infrastructure, and the state. In the area of "society", 10 fields of action are listed, one of which, called "women", has the following objectives: to achieve equal pay between men and women; to ensure equal participation at the highest levels of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government; to eliminate all forms of violence against women; and to promote comprehensive health for women and sexual and reproductive rights.

4. Barriers and constraints faced by social organizations and women's organizations in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals

While LAC countries have made much-needed progress in creating gender equality policies, it is still the case that women, women's organizations, and civil society in general face significant constraints and barriers in the domestic and public spheres in translating the good intentions and the laws and regulations in these policies into daily practice.

There are several factors that explain these difficulties, and they are rooted in practices and ideologies inherited from colonialism that are deeply patriarchal, racist, and extractivist. Thus, women's entry into what are otherwise considered to be men's domains—such as women's greater participation in decision-making or public office—remains constrained by the weight of power relations not only around gender, but also ethnicity, geographical origin, party affiliation, and other forms of discrimination. Hence, gender

cross-cuts the other forms of cultural, social, economic, and political discrimination that affect not only women, but also men who are discriminated against on the basis of their sexual orientation, ethnicity, or economic status.

The results of the gender assessments carried out by GFC members in the five LAC countries reflect, in part, the difficulties of achieving official gender equality policies in daily life, but also the limitations and manifestations of

different forms of discrimination embedded in structures, behaviours, and ways of thinking.

Because the gender assessments were carried out within the framework of the Women2030 program to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the following section analyses the different gender constraints and barriers that also relate to the SDGs prioritized by the program and by partner organizations in each country.

Group discussion during a Women2030 event in Bolivia. CIPCA



4.1 Lack of rights over the use and control of land, forests, and other natural resources

Before beginning the analysis of the results obtained in the five countries, it is relevant to clarify that land rights and the use of other key resources such as water, seeds (biodiversity), and forests include multiple rights, such as: the right of access (the resource is available and accessible), right of use (it is recognized and accepted by society), right of control (ownership and decision-making on the management of the resource), and right of transfer (inheritance). The actual observance of the right to land and forests and other natural resources is only possible when these multiple rights are recognized and exercised. If one of these rights (for example, the right of control) is not exercised, then the right is violated overall. Thus,

the policies and programs that have sought to ensure women's legal access to land and natural resources still have not produced the expected results in terms of equality and women's empowerment due to structural barriers preventing the observance of other related rights (for example, use and control) (Agarwal 1994 and Vera Delgado 2011).

The observance of men's and women's rights to land and other natural resources such as forests is related to SDG 1 (End Poverty) and SDG 5 (Gender Equality). The gender assessments focused mainly on Target 1.4, also related to SDG 5 Target 5.a.

Target 1.4:

By 2030, ensure that all men and women, particularly the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership, and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology, and financial services including microfinance.

Target 5.a:

Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws.

Results

The trend among those interviewed as part of the gender assessments in the five countries is that a large percentage of rural men and women work on land owned by their parents; this is true for 18% of men and 17% of women in Paraguay; 38% men and 35% of women in Chile; 35% of men and 25% of women in Bolivia; and 32% of men and 23% of women in Brazil.

With regard to land ownership rights, in the case of **Colombia**, only 8% of women interviewed own land, 36% lack land titles, and 50% indicated that they live on land owned by their parents or husbands (Fundaeexpresión 2020). In **Paraguay**, 17% of women interviewed own land, while 35% live on property owned by their husbands. In **Chile**, the results of

individual surveys are somewhat contrasting; while in one Indigenous community (Loncar), about 55% of men and 30% of women state that they own their land, men in another Indigenous community (Trem Trem Mapu) indicate that they do not own land. Among the latter, 50% indicate that the land they work is owned by their wife and the other 50% state that the land is owned by their parents. According to men's perception, land ownership in Trem Trem Mapu would be matriarchal.

Among men interviewed in Trem Trem Mapu, the issue of individual land ownership is apparently not a matter of concern for the Mapuche because it is accepted and recognized that women and men have the same rights to

decide on the management of land and natural resources such as forests. However, about 60% of Mapuche women interviewed indicated that they are involved in control over land.

The observance of the land rights of non-Indigenous peasant women in Chile appears to be different from that of Indigenous communities. Data from the 2017 Census indicate that, at the national level, peasant women participate in land ownership at a rate of 24.4%, versus 75.6% for peasant men. This data would indicate a larger percentage of women landowners overall compared to the other countries, however, the amount of land owned by women is still far smaller in relation to that of men. As stated by ANAMURI leader

Alicia Muñoz (interviewed by Colectivo VientoSur in 2019): *“Peasant women work on small pieces of land that are practically their gardens... in general, land tenure is not in the hands of women”.*

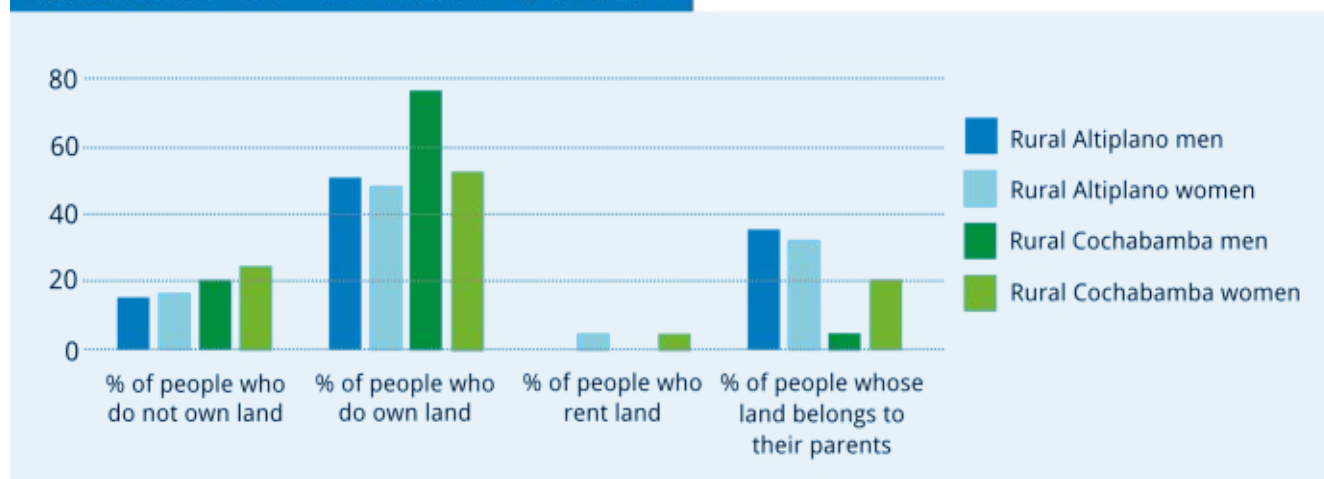
In the case of **Bolivia**, a large percentage of women interviewed stated that they own land; 47% in the Altiplano area and 52% in the Cochabamba Valley (see Figure 1). This trend is partly explained by titling policies that favour women in Bolivia. However, progress in formal equality has not always meant real equality between men and women or empowerment for women in rural areas. In the context of Indigenous peasant communities, access to land and its use, control, and inheritance are guaranteed by customary law. In other words, conditions of access, tenure/ownership, and control of land for women are mediated by cultural norms and agreements that vary between regions, ecological zones, types of economies, identities, and levels of connection with the urban environment and the political system. To better understand this situation, we refer to the case of Doña Ely (see Annex 1), who

defends her right to use collective land in an Indigenous community in Tarija even though her husband migrated to Argentina for work nine years ago. (CIPCA 2020).

Another interesting aspect of the surveys is that they indicate that, in general, in the five countries, over 65% of men say that women in their homes are involved in decision-making over the management of the land used by the family. However, this contrasts significantly with rural women's own perspectives. Women view their opportunities for participation in decision-making as limited, as indicated by a woman from Lebrija, Colombia: *“Women initially had little access to and control over resources. For example, the farm was only in the name of the husband, this situation was quite unfair because it did not let the woman participate in the production, adaptation, and management of the farm. Worse yet, if the husband profited economically from the farm, this money was just for him, nothing for the wife or children, but thanks to some changes in the law, this situation improved a little”¹⁷.*

With regard to access to and respect for the communal land rights and other resources, such as water and forests, reports from the five countries and the discussions at the regional meeting of Women2030 LAC¹⁸ partners indicate a growing usurpation and appropriation of large areas of land, water, and forest resources by transnational corporations involved in different **extractive industries**. This leads to rural populations being ‘cornered’ (in the words of a Mapuche woman) and experiencing forced displacement. Men and women—particularly women who remain in their communities—are often forced to sell their labour to extractive companies for meagre wages, risking their health and personal safety. Another consequence of extractive industries is environmental problems and conflicts that lead to deforestation, loss of biodiversity, loss of the productive capacity of soil, pollution, and the drying up of water sources (see specific cases in section 4.8).

Figure 1: Land tenure in Bolivia, percentage by gender



¹⁷ Testimony from the meeting with the women's group in Lebrija (AMUCALE).

¹⁸ See report of the Women2030 Regional Meeting of LAC countries: <https://globalforestcoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Principales-conclusiones-Women2030-para-la-Carpa-de-las-Mujeres.pdf>

4.2 Living conditions and basic services

Living conditions¹⁹ are measured by certain observable indicators, including: economic situation, access to safe water and basic sanitation, access to energy, access to education, and adequate housing. These indicators are covered by SDG 1 Target 1.4.

The results of the gender assessments demonstrate high rates of dissatisfaction with living conditions, especially in rural areas of the five countries studied. For example, women interviewed in the three rural localities of Colombia consider their economic situation to be unfavourable (56% of women in Cachirí, 58% of women in Santa Cruz de la Colina, and 53% of women in Lebrija). Regarding the unfavourable perception of economic, housing, and sanitation conditions, disenchantment is more notable in the areas of Santa Cruz de la Colina and Cachirí. This has to do with the fact that they are in distant and overlooked geographical areas that are also affected by violence because of armed groups, which limits economic and productive activities (Fundaexpresión 2020).

In the rural community of Santory in Paraguay, 93% of residents view their economic situation as bad or very bad. Meanwhile, 90% perceive their access to water as bad or very bad and 88% rate their housing as bad or very bad (HEÑOI 2020).

In Chile, official data indicate the following: in Mariquina, 35.7% of the population lacks basic services and 19.7% of households are overcrowded; and in Loncar, 17.6% of the population lacks basic services and 14.5% of households are overcrowded (BCN, 2017). Women are particularly dissatisfied with sanitation conditions, access to water, and overcrowding (VientoSur 2020). In rural Bolivia, women also express dissatisfaction regarding these issues. In contrast, men demonstrate significant dissatisfaction with their very poor economic conditions, including insufficient access to energy. This correlates with a perception among both men and women that men are responsible for supporting the family.

Poor living conditions are further aggravated for Indigenous communities. In the case of the Mapuche in Chile, in addition to not being officially recognized, they have been systematically violated, discredited, and stigmatized by the state. This situation is also reflected in the annual national budget, which according to Councillor Luis Hueraman from Loncoche, Mapuche communities receive just 0.3% of it; he states that *“we do not exist for the system”* (Colectivo VientoSur 2020). It is no coincidence then that the regions of La Araucanía and Los Ríos have poverty rates of 17.2% and 12.1% respectively, and La Araucanía has Chile’s highest rate of extreme poverty (4.6%). Among women in these two regions, 14% are living in poverty, versus 8% for men, while in rural areas those figures are 9% for women versus 8.2% for men. Indigenous poverty is concentrated in rural areas, and it stands at 55.1% (Casen, 2017, referenced by Colectivo VientoSur 2020).

In Colombia, conditions of poverty in rural areas are also linked to the state’s contempt for the peasantry. As evidence of this, for example, the Colombian government abstained from voting in September 2018 on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas. However, in response to peasant struggles, this declaration was ultimately adopted by the Third Committee of the General Assembly (Fundaexpresión 2020).



Indigenous settlement at a Women2030 project site in Paraguay.
Inés Franceschelli

¹⁹ Concept conceived of in the context of the United Nations-promoted debate on Sustainable Human Development to demonstrate that development is a paradigm that goes far beyond the increase or decrease in a country’s income.

4.3 Lack of appreciation and full recognition of the role of women in maintaining family and community agri-food systems

Among feminist movements, social researchers, and academia, it is well known that women in rural communities have played and continue to play a decisive role in maintaining agri-food systems²⁰ and sustaining family food security (AIGE 2013, FAO 2011, Women2030 and GWA 2017). However, this role is not always recognized by agricultural professionals, agri-food policy makers, or even husbands and male leaders of peasant and Indigenous communities. Section 4.1 discussed the fact that, despite official policies that seek to favour and ensure women's access to land, their real rights are not respected.

The importance of recognizing women's roles in maintaining agri-food systems also concerns the fulfilment of SDG 2 Target 2.4: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture.

In addition to the fulfilment of Target 2.4, it is important to recognize the role of women in the food production system because of the fact that the emigration of adult males from rural communities has been increasing in recent decades due to neoliberal policies (which create more poverty and the abandonment of rural areas). Recently, the effects of climate change have also contributed to this phenomenon, resulting in what is well known as the 'feminization' of agriculture (FAO 2011). Women must remain in the

communities to care for children and manage agricultural plots, as in the case of Ely in Tarija, Bolivia, whose husband left for Argentina and to date has not returned. In fact, in Bolivia, according to the 2013 Agricultural Census, women are in charge of 25% of the country's Agricultural Productive Units (UPAs, for their initials in Spanish), and this percentage rises to 30% in areas such as the Altiplano/La Paz (CIPCA 2020).

In Chile, according to the VII Agricultural and Forestry Census of 2007, female-headed farms account for 31.7% of the total, which are mostly smaller farms in economic size (small-scale agriculture), roughly 40% of which are not regulated or recorded in land registries²¹.

In Brazil, according to the most recent Agricultural Census in 2017²², 18.7% of rural enterprises in the country are run by women. Among the more than 11 million women over 15 years of age living in rural areas in 2015, just over half (50.3%) were deemed economically active.

The daily practices of women working their plots in the areas studied demonstrates that they are developing different strategies to ensure healthy nutrition for families (see Chapter V for specific cases). These practices range from the adoption of agro-ecological and agroforestry practices to the use and conservation of local seeds, small-scale livestock farming, and conservation of

Target 2.4:

By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters, and that progressively improve land and soil quality.

medicinal plants. It is worth mentioning that the adoption and diversification of these different agricultural practices is not only aimed at contributing to balanced and healthy family nutrition, but also the health and conservation of local ecosystems (water sources, soil fertility, biodiversity, forest systems, among others). The added value of these practices is that rural women and men are also strengthening their capacity to adapt to climate change.

While women in the countryside seek to promote sustainable agri-food systems, this takes a toll on their physical and emotional energy, particularly when they lack the support of husbands or other male family members. As a woman from Santander, Colombia, states: *"men seek out what's easy and practical, [and] prefer to use agrochemicals and improved seeds to produce more, in large quantities and earn more money, but women look out for the health of the family. But it takes a lot of effort to work our plots; sometimes we ask the children to*

²⁰ Agri-food systems include the production, conservation, processing, and marketing of agricultural foods.

²¹ "Situación de las mujeres en el sector silvoagropastoril, avances y desafíos pendientes en materia de equidad de género" Qualitas Agroconsultores, January 2010. https://www.indap.gob.cl/docs/default-source/descargas-agricultura-familiar-campesina/qualitasac_2010_mujeragricola_censo.pdf

²² Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (IBGE), Censo Agropecuario, 2017.

help us" (Interview at the Women2030 regional event in Chile). State agricultural programs and private enterprises promote "competitiveness" through external and agrochemical technology packages. They force peasants to borrow and become indebted to such an extent that some may lose their property for failing to meet credit obligations. Thus, peasant women are more reluctant to accept these packages (Fundaeexpresión 2020).

However, women organized in women's associations attempt to promote the advantages of adopting agroecology free of chemicals, such as the case of the Association of Agricultural Producers (ASOVIVIR) of Colombia, which promotes agroecological practices and alternative livestock rearing in reserves (See Chapter V). These associations are not always viewed favourably by local men and women who are not part of the association, who may view them as *"a waste of time, a matter of frivolous meetings for women used for gossip"* (Testimony of a woman from AMUCALE). However, this negative perception is gradually changing, and organized women are gaining recognition in their families and communities. Men believe that *"women bear the cultural roots of care; women are conditioned to care and protect"*²³.

Thus, women's struggles to secure a piece of land where they can demonstrate the advantages of agro-ecological production and gain respect in the community are fundamental. These struggles are a matter of dignity and care for the livelihood of the family, as indicated in the following testimony by a partner in Paraguay: *"If we women do not fight, we will have no land on*

which to live, and we will go live on the edges of cities where we will be hungry and we will probably have to eat from the trash. We no longer value our seeds, we do not realize their value. What are we going to do without seeds, what are we going to plant? GMOs? The land does not run out, but money does" (Testimony of Norma Amarilla, from the community of Santory, Caaguazú, Paraguay).

An interesting aspect that is emerging in rural areas, and in the face of lack of access to and/or control of land, is that women are developing different strategies to create other income-generating activities by circulating in different spaces (rural and urban), territories, and social networks.

For example, in Bolivia, women from the Altiplano are experts in managing supply chains that even encompass international trade (Peru, Argentina, and Brazil). CIPCA (2020) rightly points out that women in Bolivia are generating new forms of agency and 'rurality' in which they define themselves not only as agricultural producers, but also as small entrepreneurs based on the pluriactivity and multifunctionality of family units and social networks.



²³ Testimony from the meeting with the group of women of Santa Cruz de la Colina (Asociación de Productores Agropecuarios, ASOVIR).

4.4 Domestic, political, and structural violence

Targets 5.1, 5.2, and 5.3 of SDG 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls) are directly related to policies and actions aimed at ending all forms of violence against women and girls.

The reports from the five countries all demonstrate that the violence faced by women is not only domestic violence, but also forms of structural, political, economic, and cultural violence exercised by the state and multi-national corporations (private investment) engaged in extractive industries. The latter are legitimized by national laws. The net result is that women, men, and young people in general are all victims of the many forms of violence.

Section 3.1 demonstrated how states have made progress on policies, laws, and measures to stop violence against women and girls. However, the phenomenon of violence is a problem that plagues all five countries. Rates of femicide²⁴ are steadily increasing. For example, in Colombia, according to the National Institute of Legal Medicine and Forensic Sciences, 1,080 women were murdered between January 2018 and February 2019; 12 more than in the same period in 2017. According to the same organization, in the first 10 months of 2019, more than 98,583 women were victims of gender-based violence. This included 34,183 cases of partner violence, 31,044 cases of interpersonal violence, 18,967 cases of sexual violence, 13,160 cases of domestic violence, and 799 femicides²⁵. In

the Department of Santander alone, during the first six months of 2019 (January-July), a total of eight femicides were recorded.

In Paraguay, according to the *Observatorio de Violencia de Género*, 46 women were killed in 2016, 60 in 2017, 60 in 2018, and 49 in 2019²⁶. In Chile, according to the registry of the *Red Chilena contra la Violencia hacia las Mujeres*, in 2019 (as of December 19), 61 femicides were committed, figures that differ from the official statistics, which reduce these murders to crimes in the family context, according to Chilean legislation (Law 20.480). In Brazil, according to the recent survey of the Brazilian Forum on Public Security (FBSP, 2019), there was a 30.7% increase in the number of female homicides nationally during the decade from 2007 to 2017. The category of femicide has been used in Bolivia since the enactment of the Comprehensive Law to Guarantee Women a Life Free of Violence (No. 348). Since then, the figures have been the following: 26 cases in 2013, 71 in 2014, 110 in 2015, 111 in 2016, 109 in 2017, 128 in 2018 and 116 in 2019, with 2018 being the most fatal year.

Not surprisingly, women and men interviewed in all five countries agreed that combating violence must be made a priority in order to achieve gender equality. In some communities, men ranked the need to develop campaigns to stop violence against women as the number one priority; this was the case in Paraguay in Santary, and in Colombia in Lebrija, Santa

Target 5.1:

End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere.

Target 5.2:

Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.

Target 5.3:

Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage.

Cruz de la Colina and Cachirí (see Figures 2 and 3).

In the case of LAC countries, the state's excessive and systematic violation of the human rights of indigenous women (and men) and environmental defenders in indigenous communities is a matter of concern²⁷. For example, in Chile in 2016, a Mapuche woman named Lorenza Cayuhan was forced to give birth in shackles and in the presence of police officials. After a painful trial, the courts acquitted the accused of all criminal responsibility. In Colombia in October 2019, Cristina Taquinas Bautista, a leader of the Neehwe'sx Indigenous community (Tacueyó reserve in the Department of Cauca), was murdered by an armed group

²⁴ "Femicide is one of the most extreme expressions of macho violence and its occurrence is not casual; it responds to cultural patterns seated in power structures that produce and reproduce violence against women and girls" (Red Chilena, 2019, p. 4).

²⁵ "Medicina Legal advierte que este año han sido violentadas mas de 98 mil mujeres", La FM, 27 November 2019.

²⁶ <https://www.lafm.com.co/colombia/medicina-legal-advierte-que-este-ano-han-sido-violentadas-mas-de-98-mil-mujeres>

²⁷ "Feminicidios en el año 2018", Observatorio de violencia de género, <http://observaviolencia.org/2018/01/18/feminicidios/>

along with four other leaders for speaking out in defense of the forests of her territory. Prior to her murder, she stated: “if we are silent, they kill us anyway, so we speak”. In Brazil, many women activists have been killed, including city councillor Marielle Franco, whose death was decried by the international community,

and Dilma Ferreira da Silva, regional coordinator of the Movement of People Affected by Dams in Tucumú in Pará State.

In general, states do not create the appropriate tools to understand and record, much less prevent and eradicate, violence marginalized by their ethnic, social, and cultural

backgrounds. Rather, “it is one of the largest producers and reproducers of patriarchal violence through all its structures and apparatus” (Chilean Network, 2019) such as the judiciary and police. This is particularly serious given that states have ratified different international conventions and created national regulations

Figure 2: Number one concern by gender/region in Colombia to achieve gender equality

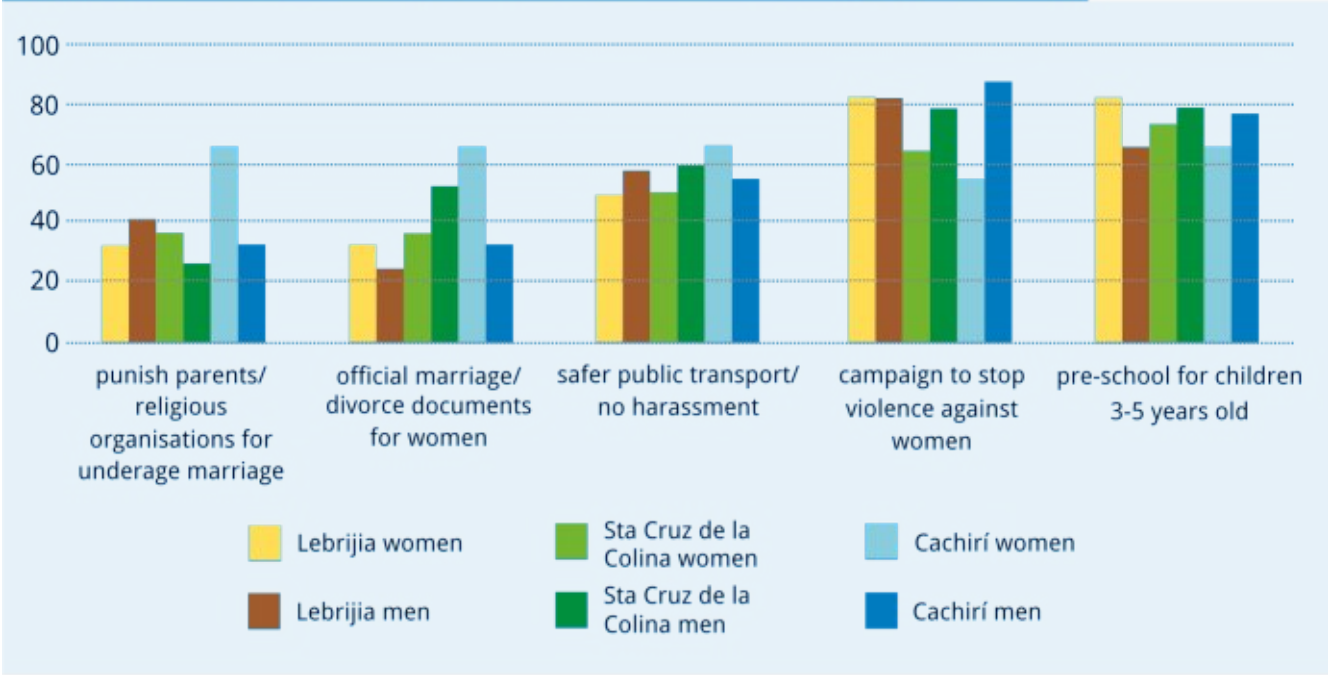
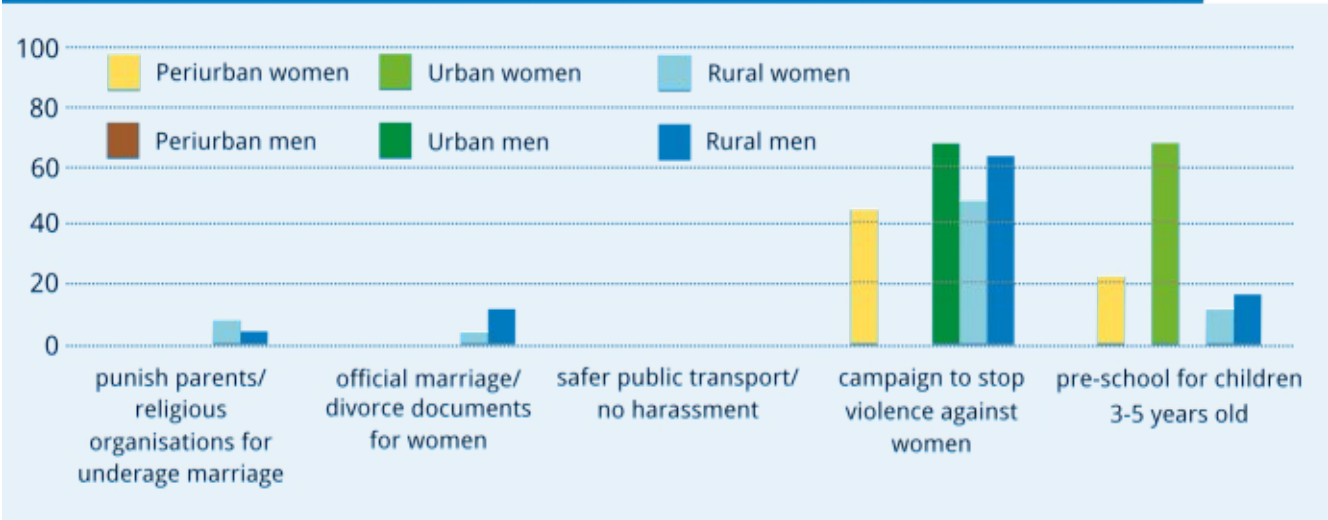


Figure 3: Number one concern by gender/region in Santory, Paraguay, to achieve gender equality



that are not being adhered to (see section 3.1).

The results of the gender assessments in Chile, Colombia, and Paraguay accurately portray how women and men in the communities studied are victims of economic, social, and cultural violence that result from extractive and accumulation-by-dispossession policies. Practices that generate violence that disproportionately impacts women include forest plantations in Mapuche territories, the expansion of soybean monocultures and unsustainable livestock farming in Paraguay, and coca plantations and gold exploitation in Colombia. In this regard, Fernández (2019, cited by VientoSur 2020) correctly states: *“The appropriation and exploitation of nature became the reference point to oppress women*

and girls, especially Indigenous, peasant, Afro and migrant women, through the domination of their bodies and various territorialities. Thus, women and nature receive the same treatment (...) as resources...”.

When women and men in the affected communities demand basic respect for their rights, the response is the militarization of their territories. In Chile, the raids and repression targeting Mapuche communities under the so-called “war on terrorism” established by President Piñera are common and daily occurrences in Mapuche territories. In Colombia, several armed actors and criminal groups linked to drug trafficking continue to operate in different parts of the territory despite the peace agreement signed with the FARC²⁸. Among the multiple consequences is the fact that, of the 7.7 million

internally displaced persons, 52% are women. According to reports from the International Institute for Peace and Development Studies (Indepaz), 777 human rights leaders and defenders were killed between 2016 and September of 2019. According to UN data, the following data on violence against women are cited: *“In the aftermath of the war, women often appear to be the main victims. The UN has recorded 1,164 crimes against sexual integrity in the context of the conflict over the past three years. Of these cases, 90% were committed against women”*²⁹.

4.5 Undervalued ‘reproductive’ work and remunerative discrimination of ‘productive’ work’

SDG 5 Target 5.4 addresses recognizing and valuing women's reproductive labour or 'unpaid care and domestic work'.

The results of the gender assessments reveal that women generally spend 10 to 15 hours on reproductive work each day, and in some cases, women's perceptions indicate that they are occupied 24 hours a day in family care (Case of a woman interviewed in an urban area of Brazil, MUPAN 2019). Women also report that the time they spend engaging in productive work each day ranges from four hours (rural areas) to 12 hours (peri-urban and urban

areas). Meanwhile, men spend 6-10 hours each day on productive work and 1-6 hours (peri-urban and urban areas) on reproductive work. The results also indicate that men dedicate 1-3 hours per day to free time spent on sport activities and watching television (in peri-urban and urban areas) (Data from individual interviews in the five countries, 2019).

In general, women in the communities where gender assessments were conducted value the domestic work and care they provide for the family and community. The problem arises when societies, and specifically

Target 5.4:

Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies, and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate.

state statistics, do not recognize this exhausting work and the contribution of women and girls to sustaining the entire capitalist patriarchal system. Surprisingly, those engaged in this work are described as ‘inactive’ or ‘not

²⁷ According to a report by Front Line Defenders, two-thirds of the murders of human rights defenders around the world in 2019 occurred in LAC. Colombia was in the top spot, with 109 activists killed. Available here: <https://www.theguardian.com/law/2020/jan/14/300-human-rights-activists-killed-2019-report>

²⁸ On September 26, 2016, a peace agreement was signed between the government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC).

²⁹ Data sourced from: PACIFISTA: Las cifras de la ONU lo demuestran: la violencia se desbordó en 2018. <https://pacifista.tv/notas/onu-colombia-conflicto-2019-ivan-duque-desplazamiento/>

working', 'not contributing to the family economy', etc. For example, a UN Women document (2015, cited by CIPCA 2020) indicates that 63% of the inactive population consists of women, which does not mean that these women do not perform some type of work; in reality, they are doing unpaid family care work, which involves a great investment of time, energy, knowledge, and emotion.



Statistics

strategically obscure and/or devalue the contribution of domestic labour to the family economy, national economies, and the global economy. This work is naturalized based on the premise that women have a 'biological condition' that enables them to care for family members. This naturalization of women's ability to provide care stems from a social construction in which women are thought to possess 'special skills' for caring. For the feminist economy, this assignment of care work to women is an inherent feature of a capitalist system that requires the reproduction of the labour force as cheaply as possible. Therefore, it is very convenient for this economic system to underestimate care work as part of women's traditional roles (CIPCA 2020).

Men in the communities also partly believe that domestic work is the responsibility of women, an idea that is sometimes fostered by women themselves, as suggested by a woman from Lebrija, Colombia (Interview by Claudia Gimena Roa at a meeting with AMMUCALE women during the gender assessment): *"The division of roles responds to a macho culture, leaving women at a clear disadvantage, and this problem is the product of a tradition promoted by women themselves. For these women, men should not engage in women's activities, and this is passed on from generation to generation, from father to son. In this way, women have been responsible for turning men into machistas"*. This testimony partly explains why men resist sharing domestic work more equitably, although unemployed men in peri-urban and urban areas do feel

compelled to take on greater roles in reproductive work.

Women who engage in productive work—usually in the informal sector and without benefits—or who manage to enter salaried work report that the income they earn is significantly lower than that of men who do the same work. In Paraguay, women, despite being head of household in 36.4% of homes³⁰, earn about 70.6% of what men earn, regardless of their educational level or hours worked. In Bolivia, the gender wage gap is particularly large in management positions (38.6%) and construction-related jobs (51%). In Colombia, according to the UN, *"a woman receives 88 pesos for every 100 that a man receives for doing the same work. The wage gap between men and women was 12% in 2018. The gap is even wider at low educational levels; women without education*

³⁰ Atlas demográfico del Paraguay. DGECC, 2015. <http://www.dgeec.gov.py/Publicaciones/Biblioteca/atlas-demografico/Atlas%20Demografico%20del%20Paraguay,%202012.pdf>

*earn 63 pesos for every 100 pesos that men receive... The gap persists even at high educational levels; women with university studies receive 81 pesos for every 100 that men receive at this same educational level*³¹.

Pay injustices have a cultural as well as a gender dimension. In Chile, Mapuche wage earners often only have access to unskilled jobs that are alienating. In the

opinion of researcher Pamela Caro, “all jobs that are feminized have a lower value in the market” (Interview, Sept. 2019). Mapuche women also receive lower incomes, not only compared to Mapuche men (9.5% less), but also compared to non-Indigenous women (16.8% less), and non-Indigenous men (42.5% less) (Ethnographic+Research, 2017, cited by VientoSur 2020). In general, men and women in rural

and peri-urban areas seeking paid work in urban areas are treated in a disrespectful manner that sometimes leads to shame regarding their identity. For example, only one-third of women interviewed in Bolivia's Cochabamba Valley are proud to be women, whereas a smaller percentage of men in the same area claim not to be proud to be men.

³¹ ONU MUJERES-DANE: Empoderamiento Económico de las Mujeres en Colombia, Boletín Estadístico. October 2019: <https://colombia.unwomen.org/es/biblioteca/publicaciones/2019/09/boletin-estadistico>

Lack of access to capacity-building opportunities

In Bolivia, despite national literacy programmes, rural women have the lowest literacy rates; literacy among this group is 83%, which is more than 10% lower than for rural men and about 12% lower than for urban women. Under a differentiated analysis based on belonging to Indigenous and Native Peasant Peoples and Nations (*Naciones y Pueblos Indígenas Originario Campesinos* or NPIOC), greater differences are observed between women than men, with 60% reporting not having studied or having only attended primary school. The difference is greater with regard to secondary school and above.

In Colombia, rural schools place greater emphasis on educational programmes designed to serve young people in cities rather than in the countryside. Instead of encouraging an appreciation for agriculture, students are shown an external model, a

world in which they can be mechanics, labourers, construction workers, etc. However, in some cases, both female and male teachers have been given the task of encouraging programs of appreciation for peasant culture and environmental heritage.

Regarding training for adult peasants, there is a lack of

consideration of alternative or informal education as essential tools for personal and collective growth. Popular education can include processes of exchange within the community and with other communities. In this respect, both women and men experience economic difficulties in getting ahead, but they are much more pronounced among women.

Young biodiversity monitors, Colombia. Fundaexpresión



4.6 Women's effective participation in decision-making spaces and political leadership

SDG 5 Target 5.5 addresses women's full and effective participation (voice, vote, and representation).

The results of the gender assessment indicate that, in general, women in the five countries are making progress in their participation in decision-making at both the local and national levels.

In Colombia, about 70% of women and 90% of men believe that women influence decisions at the local level, while about 65% of women and 70% of men believe that women influence decisions at the national level. These high percentages are striking, because although women account for 52% of the Colombian population, only 20% of legislators in Congress are female. For the 2018-2022 legislative period, only 19 women were elected to the Senate out of 108 seats, and 23 women were elected to the House out of 171 seats.

Although new policies aim to increase women's participation in public office³², the women surveyed stated that they feel excluded in terms of **community participation** in decision-making positions related to the management of key resources. Men generally dominate the community committees and representation at institutional meetings. In rural areas, women are viewed as "incapable" of holding positions of authority.

In the case of Paraguay, 50% of women and 40% of men in rural areas believe that women influence decision-making at the

local level, while about 35% of women and 18% of men believe that they influence decision-making at the national level. In some ways, these views are reflected in the percentage of seats occupied by women in the national parliament and in local governments. In 2000, women held 2.5% of seats in parliament, a figure that grew to 11% in 2017 in parliament and 13.75% in local governments. Meanwhile, the percentage of women in public managerial positions grew from 34.6% to 38.7% between 2007 and 2015³³ (HEÑOI 2020).

Bolivia is a unique case in the context of LAC countries. According to the Observatory on Gender Equality in Latin America and the Caribbean, Bolivia has one of the region's highest percentages of women in parliament. It was the second country—after Rwanda—to achieve democratic parity in terms of equality between men and women in the legislature. The most success is seen in the case of subnational governments: at the departmental level, the proportion of female

Target 5.5:

Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life.

elected assembly members increased from 27.6% to 45.5% between 2010 and 2015; and at the municipal level, the proportion of female councilors rose from 42.6% to 51.1% during the same period. Less success is seen in the case of female mayors (8%) and female departmental governors (0%), or in the case of ministers in the executive branch, whose participation decreased from 50% to 33.3% between 2010 and 2015 and to 20% in 2017 (CIPCA 2020). The results of the gender assessment in Bolivia indicate that, among men, about 78% believe that women influence decision-making at the local level and 35% believe that women influence decision-making at the national level. Women's assessments are slightly higher.



Presentation during Women2030 event in Bolivia. CIPCA

³² Colombia's Law No. 581 of 2000 is known as the Quota Law, which stipulates that 30% of high public offices must be filled by women.

³³ Source: Global Database Indicators of Sustainable Development Goals. Available at: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/database/?area=PRY>

4.7 Gender and climate change

In general, there is a perception that the impacts of climate change are neutral or the same for men, women, children, and those with disabilities. This belief partly explains the reluctance of states to integrate gender into plans and strategies to combat climate change.

However, the results of the gender assessment demonstrate that the impacts of climate change are felt differently by men and women in the communities studied (see Figures 4, 5, 6 and 7) and that women play an important role in initiatives to mitigate climate change, as well as initiatives to conserve and restore forests. These figures depict the responses to the following question: *“How does climate change affect you? Of the four impacts listed, please choose that with the greatest effect.”*

In two communities in Colombia (Santa Cruz de la Colina and Lebrija), women feel the effects of reduced harvests and rising food costs more acutely than men; meanwhile, in Lebrija, men feel water scarcity more acutely. In the rural region of Santander, Colombia, the most significant effects of climate change are the decline in river flows and the disappearance of water sources, which make it difficult to access water for domestic consumption and crop irrigation. This is particularly notable in the Lebrija area, which has been most affected by water scarcity as a result of monoculture plantations, agro-industry, and desertification; and in terms of men's perspectives, they highlight the scarcity of irrigation water due to their interest in producing large-scale crops.

In Chile, men's and women's perceptions do not differ greatly, although men in Loncoche feel the effect of water scarcity more acutely. It is understandable that water scarcity is ranked the top concern in these two Mapuche communities, because water is privatized in this country.

In the three study areas of Bolivia, in addition to gender-differentiated views on water scarcity and their impact on crops, as well as floods in some areas (El Alto, La Paz), climate migration by young people and husbands is also a concern for rural men and women.

In Brazil, it is striking that urban women feel the impacts of climate change most acutely, because of water shortages and increased local temperatures (due to the heat island effect).

Figure 4: Number of times an issue was prioritized according to gender and region, Colombia

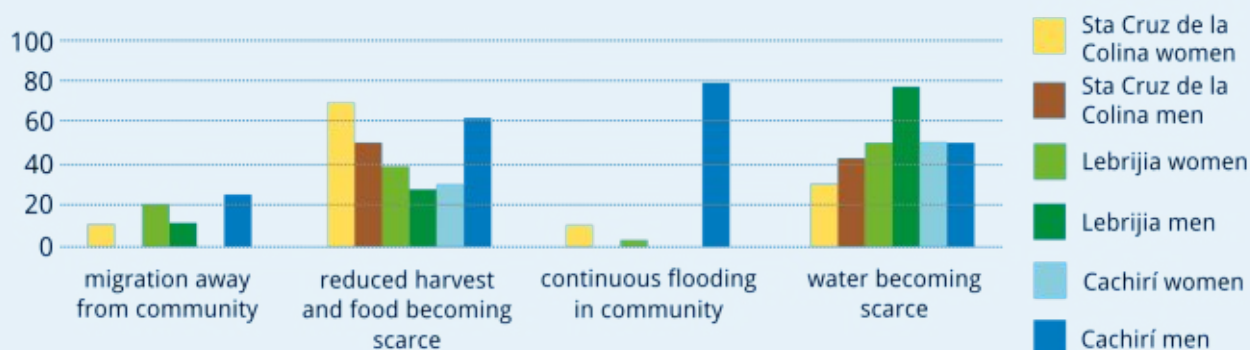
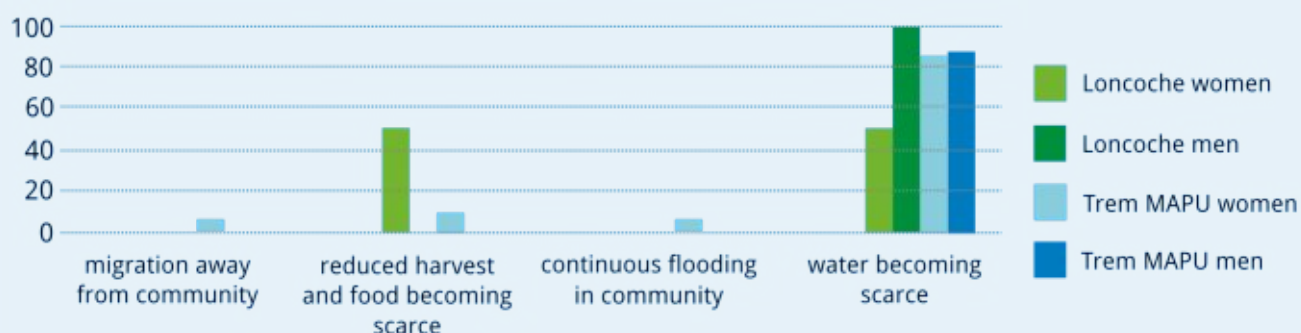


Figure 5: Number of times an issue was prioritized according to gender and region, Chile



In Paraguay, water scarcity is felt more by men in both communities, while declining harvests and rising food costs are felt more acutely by women. The issue of migration concerns both communities, particularly women in rural Santory. Water scarcity is a common problem that is part of the effects of climate change experienced by the five countries generally.

The need to integrate gender into SDG 13 (Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts) has to do with meeting Targets 13.1, 13.3, and 13.B.

There is no denying that each country's efforts to address gender in climate change are taking place in different areas and with different emphases, such as concern for the environment and within the framework of the Beijing Platform for Action agreements. Most of the measures have to do with incorporating a gender

approach into policies and programs related to the management and sustainable use of natural resources and the guarantee of women's access, management, use, and control of natural resources. The measures address substantive equality both in the use of these resources and their impact on quality of life and on actions to mitigate the consequences of climate change among the population in general and women specifically. The following countries include gender considerations as a focal point of national plans: Brazil (sustainable development with economic and social equality), Bolivia, and Colombia, which include objectives and measures related to concern for the environment and the use of natural resources within the framework of economic autonomy (ECLAC, 2019).

Target 13.1:

Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries.

Target 13.3:

Improve education, awareness raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction, and early warning.

Target 13.b:

Promote mechanisms for raising capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management in least developed countries and small island developing States, including focusing on women, youth and local and marginalized communities.

Figure 6: Number of times an issue was prioritized according to gender and region, Bolivia

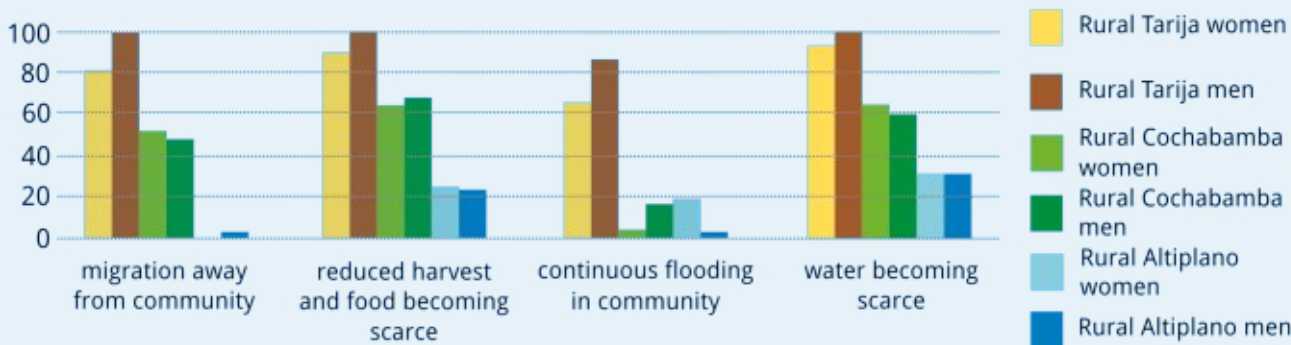
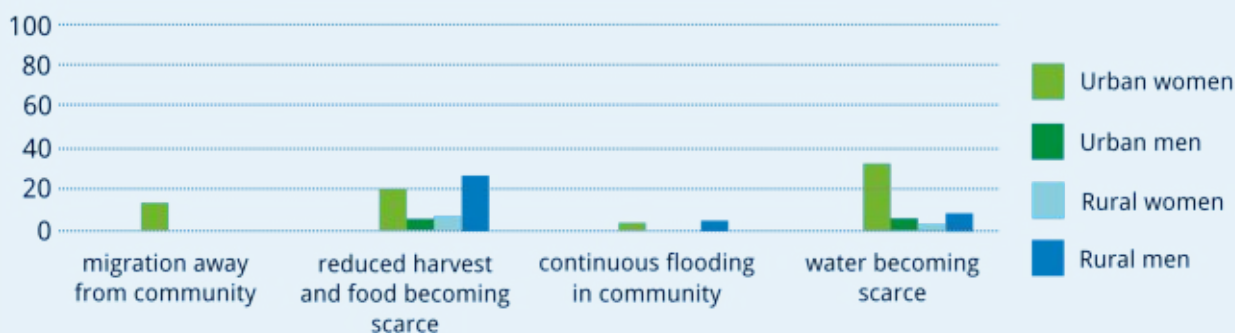


Figure 7: Number of times an issue was prioritized according to gender and region, Brazil



4.8 Gender and biodiversity and forest conservation

SDG 15 addresses the management and conservation of forest ecosystems and biodiversity: Sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss. The questions for the gender assessment were intended to draw study participants' attention to the achievement of Targets 15.2 and 15.9.

The results of the assessment suggest two relevant aspects related to these goals: a) the recognition of women's decisive participation in biodiversity conservation and management at the community level, and b) concern over the progress of extractive industries that destroy forests, resulting in the loss of biodiversity and local ecosystems.

Figures 8, 9, and 10 (on Colombia, Bolivia, and Chile, respectively) demonstrate that both men and women believe that women participate in initiatives and decision-making in biodiversity conservation at the community level. One exception is men in rural Cochabamba, Bolivia, where more than 80% of whom believe that women do not participate in decision-making in conservation initiatives.

In communities in Paraguay, men are as likely or more likely than women to believe that women participate in the conservation of communal biodiversity: 90% of men in Santory and 80% in Patria Nueva hold this view, compared to 90% and 64% of women, respectively. In Brazil, men and women generally agree that women participate in conservation initiatives at the community level, particularly in the work of the

community organisation, *Grupo de Educadores Ambientales* (Group of Environmental Educators or GEASF), which focuses on the issue of conservation. While women's participation in conservation is recognized, a large percentage of men do not agree that women lead conservation activities in their communities to the extent that they have not witnessed it.

It is interesting and encouraging to note that, in Colombia, women are recognized as the **guardians of nature**. They are the flag-bearers in community conservation actions through their organizational forms in the Peasant and Community Reserves Collective of Santander. In these reserves, women carry out agro-ecological practices involving soil conservation, the protection of water sources, forest care, and seed saving (see Chapter V). The community states that: *"Women play a more active role than men. They are guardians of nature and carry out environmentally friendly activities. One solution to the problem of pollution is to have men take care of forests and water sources"*³⁴.

However, decision-makers do not appear to share positive perceptions of the role of women in the conservation of biodiversity and local ecosystems. Gender and the role of women are not included in the implementation plans for SDG 15, which is also reflected in the VNRs of Chile, Colombia, and Paraguay (as previously stated, Brazil and Bolivia have not yet submitted their VNRs). Worse yet, these VNRs do not even make reference to SDG 15; only in the case of Chile is it included as part of strategies to mobilize financial resources

Target 15.2:

By 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally.

Target 15.9:

By 2020, integrate ecosystems and biodiversity values into national and local planning, development processes and poverty reduction strategies, and accounts.

through the so-called 'Sovereign Green Bond'. The funds raised by these bonds are intended to finance or refinance projects that protect the environment. The objective was to bring about this operation in 2019 in the foreign markets, allocating the resources to different types of "green" projects, which, in the case of Chile, will deal with clean transport, energy efficiency, renewable energies, the conservation of biodiversity and marine resources, efficient water management, and sustainable buildings (VNR of Chile 2019). However, some sectors in Chile are concerned that these 'Green Bonds' largely benefit private companies such as those that promote forest plantations.

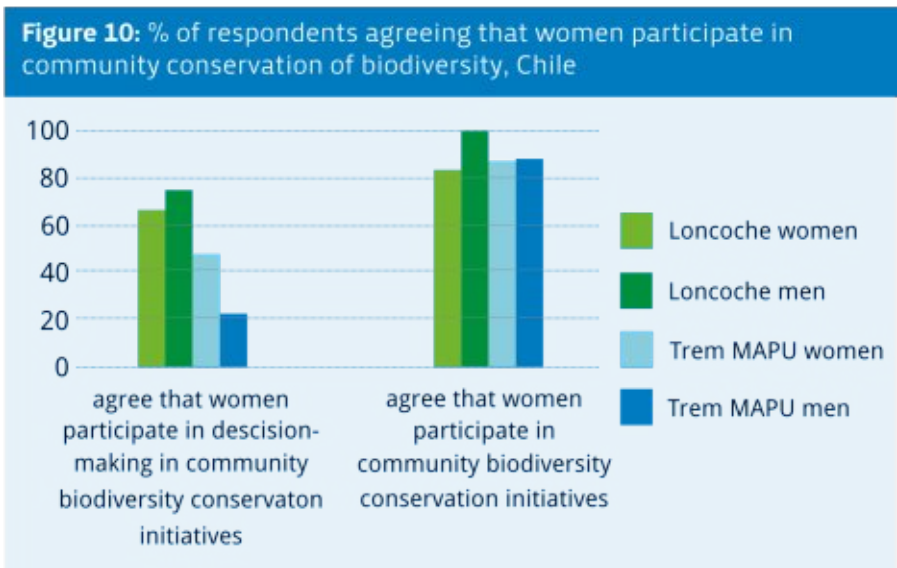
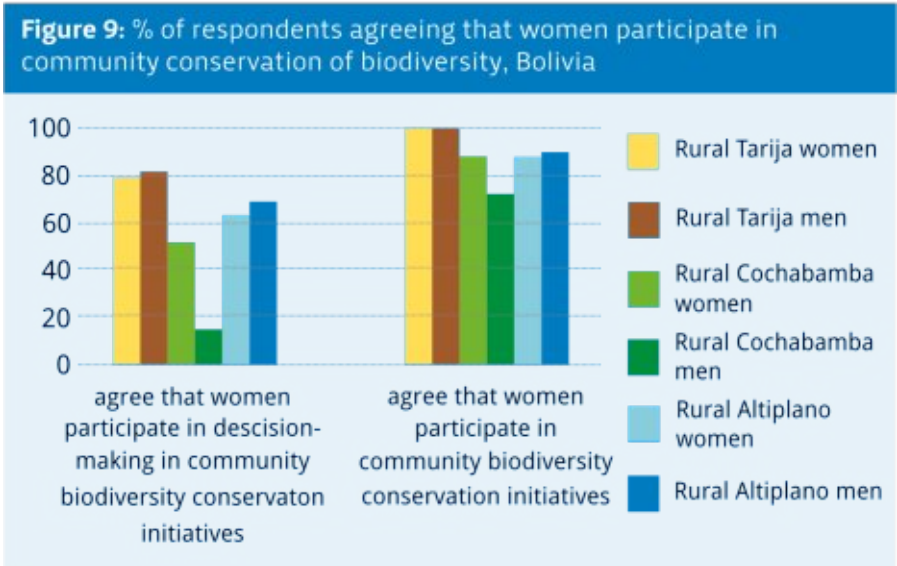
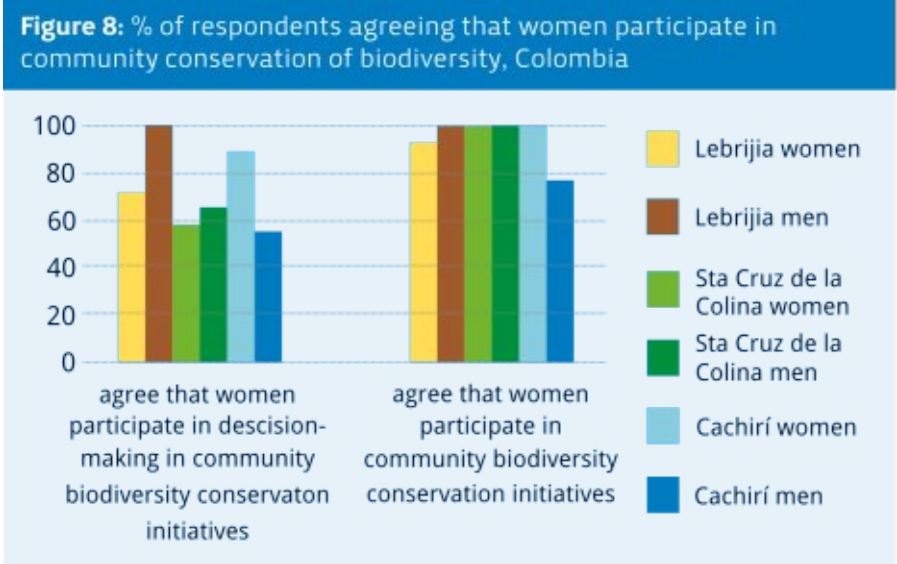
Indeed, current levels of **deforestation** and destruction of local ecosystems and biodiversity are now of considerable concern because of the expansion of extractive industries in the five countries. For example, in Chile,

³⁴ Testimony from the meeting with the women's group of Cachirí.

the main problems facing the Mapuche people are eucalyptus and pine plantations and hydroelectric projects that have turned the territory into resources for big capital, devastating native forests and seriously affecting the availability of goods such as water. For example, in Mariquina, the cellulose company CELCO has polluted water and harmed human health. In this regard, Alicia (a Mapuche community leader) comments: *“The land is in the hands of the transnationals who have cornered peasant men and women through fraudulent purchases, through different ways of deceiving the people, and the Mapuche Indigenous communities are in the same situation of being cornered; for them, it is much worse because of the usurpation of the forest”* (Interview Nov. 2019, Colectivo VientoSur 2020).

Likewise, in Chile, INDAP³⁴ and CONAF, programs aimed at promoting Mapuche production, have forced farmers to plant certain species—such as pine and eucalyptus (during the dictatorship) and currently blueberries and European hazelnut—to receive aid. The Mapuche leader Alicia comments on this: *“They bring you a technological package and you have to accept it because you are classified as one of the poorest in the commune, then comes this savior that is the famous Prodesal (INDAP program) and they pigeonhole you”* (Interviewed by VientoSur Nov. 2019). These afforestation programs use every possible means to ‘convince’ the Mapuche to create plantations, even using ILO Convention 169 for their purposes, as indicated by the following testimony: *“We worked*

³⁴ Institute for Agricultural Development, a service under the Ministry of Agriculture whose objective is to promote economic, social, and technological development among small-scale farmers and peasants. <http://www.indap.gob.cl/indap/qu%C3%A9-es-indap>



for a while with the issue of consultations [under ILO 169] and realized that they ultimately send a company to do the consultation but it is not binding... We realized—some realized earlier, we realized later—that they were ultimately in bad faith because they gave us the attendance list [to sign]—we thought it was the attendance list—but in the end they used it as [our] approval [to their projects] (...). There are government strategies here that are always sabotaging what the Mapuche people want to do for the common good”.

In Colombia, the communities in the area studied face the growing momentum of megaprojects by the state, such as road infrastructure, large mining, dams, agro-industrial companies, oil extraction, and possible fracking. Environmental and deforestation problems arise when extractive companies enter peasant and Indigenous territories to carry out their activities, as the following testimony demonstrates: *“The problem arose because of government policies that favour the extraction of resources over the*

protection of biodiversity. The rulers think that territories and forests are sources of wealth, regardless of how these policies affect nature and lead to environmental pollution”³⁵. Moreover, peasants are persecuted when they cut down trees, while multinationals are free to cut thousands of hectares because for this represents “progress” for the region in the eyes of the state; in other words, economic interests take precedence over the environmental and subsistence needs of communities (Fundaeexpresión, 2020).

The perceptions of men and women in communities contrast with the what is expressed Colombia's VNR (2017), which indicates that the government has created the “Forests of Peace” program (Resolution 470 of 2017), a model of sustainable land management that seeks to integrate biodiversity conservation with productive projects in organized communities in post-conflict settings. By May 2018, 50 such projects had been created over an area of 270,000 hectares

with the participation of approximately 6,000 families (VNR 2018).

In Paraguay, the forests of the Chaco region in the western part of the country have been particularly affected by deforestation and fires in recent decades with the aim of ‘cleaning’ land for agribusiness. Meanwhile, in the eastern region, 94% of arable land is used to cultivate genetically modified monocultures, mainly soybeans and more recently rice and eucalyptus, which is exported as animal feed for cows, pigs, and chickens. Soybean crops and pasture for industrial livestock farming are not only responsible for deforestation, but also for the pollution of watercourses and groundwater and the loss of biodiversity and soil productivity. Agrochemical fumigations endanger the entire ecosystem and undermine the rights of inhabitants to a healthy and dignified life. The advance of these predatory activities has turned the country into a wasteland and the rural peasant and Indigenous population into pariahs in their

³⁶ Testimony from the meeting with the committee of Women of Santa Cruz de la Colina, Matanza (Asociación de Productores Agropecuarios, Asovivir).



Tree nursery to promote agrobiodiversity, Colombia. Fundaeexpresión

own land (HEÑOI 2020). The following testimonies are eloquent in this regard: *“The main problem in the countryside is the loss of our territories, which are captured by monocultures of genetically modified soy and corn, in addition to intensive cattle breeding”. “Our main threat is the expansion of soy”. “The intervention of INDERT in the communities, the evictions, the judicial ‘action’ against the communities and in favour of the soy growers, lack of education – these are our problems”* (Participants in the workshop in the community of Santory, Caaguazú.)

The department of Caaguazú (with a large Indigenous population) has been experiencing a violent wave of completely illegal land grabbing, with many people wounded, disappeared, and killed. Examples include the communities of Guahory, Pindoí, and Tacuaráí, which have been resisting in the territory under steadily worsening conditions (HEÑOI 2020). However, the effects of deforestation and the expansion of soybean monocultures, coupled with the effects of climate change

(droughts), weaken the resistance and resilience of Indigenous communities, resulting in situations of extreme poverty. A clear example is what has happened to the community of Tovatiry, home of the Ava Guaraní Indigenous people. Drought in spring 2019 caused the loss of the entire corn crop and much of the bean crop. Several families have already left the community to go to the nearest town. The families that remained had to survive on cassava, hunting, and eggs provided by four hens shared among 10 families. There were also several reports of violence against women leaders by men. Despite these extreme challenges, the community continues to resist and build a better future³⁶.

In Brazil, in the Upper Paraguay River basin where the Pantanal is located (the work area of MUPAN), the native vegetation of the plateau has been razed and replaced by pastures cultivated for industrial livestock farming, as well as grain crops such as soybeans, corn, and cotton. According to Silva et al. (2011), the suppression of native vegetation in the Upper

Paraguay River basin is extremely dangerous because the environmental impacts (river sedimentation, flooding, habitat loss) occurring on its plains are caused by deforestation. Deforestation occurred at a higher rate between 1976 and 1984, then declined until 2002, increasing again from 2002 to 2008. Given the pace of deforestation, the region’s natural vegetation will disappear by 2050.

It is important to mention that in the rural and Indigenous communities of Miranda, Aquidauana, Porto Murtinho, Dois Irmãos do Buriti, Corumbá, and Bela Vista where gender assessment surveys were conducted, a large percentage of primary forests are still maintained. According to studies by WWF et al. (2009), these are the areas of intact natural vegetation in the upper part of the Upper Paraguay River basin: 93.8% in Corumbá, 65.8% in Porto Murtinho, 47.2% in Aquidauana, 42.4% in Miranda, 32.1% in Bela Vista, and 27.1% in Dois Irmãos do Buriti.

³⁷ See also: <https://globalforestcoalition.org/paraguay-cas-photo-essay/>



Indigenous community, Paraguay. Inés Franceschelli

4.9 Insufficient budgets to implement the gender equality agenda

One of the barriers and constraints faced by feminist civil society organizations and women's organizations in communities is the lack of public financial resources to advance the gender equality agenda.

At the national level, as ECLAC (2019) states, the level of budgetary visibility of gender equality strategies demonstrates inconsistencies with regard to fiscal policy between development plans and gender equality plans and policies. Budgets are inconsistent with gender equality plans and, with some exceptions, gender policies are mostly absent or have a weak presence in national budgets. This is mainly due to strong cultural and ideological resistance to gender equality in the public administrations of countries in the region. If budgets are assigned to gender, the percentages are low in comparison to the size of the work assigned in the plans. Colombia's VNR (2016), for example³⁸, indicates that 0.4% of funds were earmarked for the implementation of SDG 5, while 75% concentrated on SDGs 9, 4, 11, and 6. This has a negative impact on the achievement of gender equality objectives and demonstrates the limited capacity of state action for these purposes.

The lack of public budgets for the gender equality agenda is even

more serious when it comes to Indigenous communities. According to local councillor Luis Hueraman of Loncoche, Chile, the share of the annual national budget for these communities only 0.3%; "we do not exist for the system", the councillor rightly points out.

Currently, Official Development Assistance (ODA) from the donor countries of the development and cooperation agencies remains the important source of funding, particularly for the least developed countries (OECD)³⁹.

Because it is not possible to achieve the 17 SDGs without achieving the goals and targets on gender equality, it is imperative not only to mainstream gender in the SDGs, but also to redirect investments that harm gender equality and women's empowerment and that harm nature, biodiversity, and forest ecosystems. This is essential because these ecosystems support the food security and comprehensive health not only of marginalized populations that depend directly on them, but also of humanity and our 'Mother Earth'.

Given the real effects of climate change and ecosystem loss and shared efforts to implement the SDGs, the enormous gap between global funding for biodiversity

conservation and funds going to harmful subsidies⁴⁰ is unacceptable. Globally, **harmful subsidies** that damage biodiversity (fossil fuels, large-scale fisheries and agriculture, massive infrastructure) amount to \$500 trillion, while global funding for biodiversity conservation amounts to only \$88 trillion – almost six times less.

It should be clarified that, of the \$88 trillion, only \$49 trillion are directed at national activities related to biodiversity⁴¹, while the remaining \$39 trillion⁴² is directed at ODA projects, biodiversity offset projects, among others. It is known that biodiversity offset projects are not always good for conservation; instead, these projects can have negative impacts on ecosystems, as is occurring with carbon offsets. What the investments in fact earmark to safeguard biodiversity is 13 times less than what they spend destroying it. Thus, while we take one step forward toward achieving compliance with SDG 15 (and also SDGs 1, 2, 5, 6, and 13), we take six steps backward because extractive industries and consumerism destroy the progress achieved. This is an illogical paradox that promotes investment.

³⁸ Informe Nacional Voluntario de Colombia (2018). <https://colaboracion.dnp.gov.co/CDT/Prensa/Reporte%20Nacional%20Voluntario%20Colombia%20ODS.pdf>

³⁹ Some thirteen ADC members focused more than 50% of their aid on gender equality as their main or significant objective: Australia, Belgium, Canada, EU, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland and Sweden.

⁴⁰ In this regard, see the following publications. Why the Green Climate Fund must reject Arbaro's plantations: <https://globalforestcoalition.org/gcf-arbaro-fund/>. Forest Cover No 58, 2019: <https://globalforestcoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/forestcover-58.pdf>. Incentivising deforestation for livestock products: <https://globalforestcoalition.org/perverse-incentives-deforestation-for-livestock/>

⁴¹ CBD Clearing House Mechanism, reported by 40% Parties. 2015 data.

⁴² OECD datasets (2019).

5. Alternative responses from women's organizations to advance gender equality and *buen vivir* (living well)

Despite the barriers women's organizations face to realizing the rights recognized by international laws and agreements, they are developing alternatives to gain recognition and respect in their families and communities. They are being considered as decision-making actors and candidates for leadership positions alongside men.

Through these initiatives and projects, self-organized women are showing that it is possible to develop sustainable practices not only in harmony with the capacity of local ecosystems, but also as a real and possible route towards

living well with gender equity and climate justice. Some of these practices include agroecology, the collection and preservation of local seeds, care for medicinal plants, water harvesting, mixed livestock production at the family

level, agroforestry, the organization of local fairs for the exchange of local seeds and culinary knowledge, and care for reserve areas, among others.

5.1 The Peasant and Community Reserves Collective of Santander in Colombia

The Peasant and Community Reserves Collective of Santander emerged as a local initiative in response to different phenomena faced by local communities: the burning and irrational felling of native forests, the advancement of monocultures with the indiscriminate use of agrochemicals, industrial livestock farming, and the loss of ancestral knowledge and practices of forest care and biodiversity. It also seeks to halt the alarming displacement of rural people caused by clashes with armed groups. The collective was created by several peasant and community associations belonging to the Agroecological School of Peasant Promoters of Santander, with the support of Fundaexpresión. Its purpose is to highlight and demonstrate the importance of environmental and cultural heritage.

Experience has shown that women, unlike men, have been gaining opportunities for participation and leading initiatives in the implementation

and response of **resilience alternatives** to the effects of the climate crisis. These initiatives include rain-water crops, agroforestry systems, soil management and conservation practices, the promotion of diverse plantings, seed rescue, and in-situ nurseries. Thus, self-organized women have become managers of creative projects developed by women, allowing them to generate the autonomy to choose and produce their own

food and protect the health of their families with medicinal plants and traditional knowledge. In other words, they have become managers of local food sovereignty.

When they declare their reserves, women do so vehemently, and they are clear that matters such as **food sovereignty**, self-care with medicinal plants, and the reproduction of ornamental plants allow them to be happier in their



Community meal at Women2030 project in Colombia. Fundaexpresión



reserves. This is expressed in the following testimony: *“The role of women is more active than that of men; they are guardians of nature and carry out environmentally friendly activities. One solution to the problem of pollution is to have men take care of forests and water sources”*⁴³.

While men initially do not feel compelled to relinquish monocultures and participate little in *mingas*, women bring in all family members, including sons and daughters, and create spaces for a positive dialogue between men and women at trainings and planting *mingas*. They increasingly seek out and create spaces for playful and creative ways to train children and youth groups through activities that enact love for culture, love for the land and, of course, the defense of life.

These examples of training in the reserves motivated Fundaexpresión to initiate dialogues with rural schools with the participation of teachers and parents to promote the training of groups of children and youth on

issues related to care for forests, fauna and flora and the promotion of youth life projects. Community forest conservation allows young people to analyze the importance of their culture in caring for the planet and the pride entailed by being part of the peasant legacy that proposes *buen vivir* (living well).

Training actions are also enabling women to develop their socio-economic capacities. For example, through women's entry into **peasant markets** where they can sell their agro-ecological products and exchange a variety of seeds and the creation of spaces for rethinking and strengthening local food sovereignty.

Another aspect that is empowering women is the exchange of experiences between community organizations and planting *mingas* where several families are connected and integrated within a territory. These exchanges have strengthened women's capacities in both technical knowledge (agro-ecological practices) and economic

and political knowledge. This encourages and strengthens the territorial social and community dialogue between peasant communities who reposition themselves as actors defining strategies for their own governance in different contexts and ecosystems. Women in reserve communities have decided that forests are a priority and a survival issue, one that is not taken on individually, and not only in a single community, but rather through partnership between communities. Thus, the aim is to continue to include more women's groups and to emphasize young women through a dynamic that can advance their own economies and demands for access to land, water, agro-biodiversity and appropriate technologies, and with the recognition of women's work in caring for the land.

Women-led community reserves are currently including other community-wide activities, such as building efficient cook stoves and rain-water harvesting systems. Men are also joining spaces that are usually considered only for women, for example, food processing or embroidery. Not surprisingly, the Peasant and Community Reserve Collective is having a multiplier effect, because more community reserves are being declared⁴⁴. These reserves are seen as alternatives of resilience not only in the face of climate change, but also 'predatory extractionism' that views the forest as a source of profit, or worse yet, as an obstacle to plantations or tourism projects.

⁴³ Testimony from a meeting with the Cachirí women's group.

⁴⁴ See other experiences of the Reserve Collectives at the following link: <https://globalforestcoalition.org/community-conservation-colombia/>

5.2 Peasant and Indigenous women in Paraguay organize to tackle unsustainable agriculture and climate change

As mentioned in section 4.8, the forests of the Paraguayan Chaco are heavily affected by deforestation and fires, while the forests in the eastern part of the country are already highly degraded, particularly due to the expansion of soybean monocultures. Peasant and Indigenous communities are trapped between the agribusiness industry and the effects of climate change. Agribusiness promoters steal Indigenous lands and poison air, soil, and water, undermining community health and food sovereignty. Meanwhile, the climate emergency puts even more pressure on the already fragile capacity of affected communities to adapt and sustain their livelihoods.

Faced with these abuses, peasant and Indigenous communities are organizing to claim control over their lives and territories of life. Women are at the forefront of this resistance. Through the National Federation of Peasants (*Federación Nacional de Campesinos* or FNC) and the National Coordinator of Rural and Indigenous Women's Workers' Organizations (*Coordinadora Nacional de Organizaciones de Mujeres Trabajadoras Rurales e Indígenas* or CONAMURI), peasant and Indigenous communities, and especially women members, are working together to protect their food sovereignty, Indigenous seeds, natural medicinal resources, and traditional ancestral knowledge. With the support of HEÑOI, the FNC is strengthening its organizations through training and skill shares to address gender-based discrimination and all the other

structural, economic, and political pressures they face.

The community of Crescencio González is a direct result of the struggle for land. This cost the lives of five activists, including Crescencio González, who was the first to be killed and whose name was given to the settlement. The dispute ended when the government returned 5,000 hectares to the community to live on and cultivate. Women's participation in political assemblies and decision-making meetings in Crescencio González is increasing, and women are becoming involved with extraordinary enthusiasm. Together with their children, they participate and discuss and are heard and respected by their peers. For example, during one of these assemblies, the women in the community discussed how to achieve food sovereignty through sustainable food production while men cooked and served lunch.

One of the main objectives of the FNC is to conserve local agrobiodiversity, which covers the

variety and variability of animals, plants and microorganisms needed to maintain key ecosystem functions to ensure food production and food security. The FNC strives to support women's organizations in different communities, but one of its main constraints is financial resources, as it receives no State support. For example, the community Ava Guaraní (described in section 4.8) had planned to build a warehouse to preserve its wide range of its seeds. However, the limited resources available had to be redirected to support the drought emergency and buy seeds for the next harvest.

The women of Comité Nueva Esperanza in the community of Santory have been working for more than 10 years on the recovery and production of medicinal plants, and some have been involved in producing extracts. This group of women also actively participates in the seed exchanges carried out in the department by CONAMURI and in native seed fairs (HEÑOI 2020).



Women discuss food sovereignty and climate change in Paraguay.
Lisa Meyer

5.3 The promotion of *Küme Mongen* or *buen vivir* among the Mapuche in Chile

The alternative activities and resistance of the Mapuche communities are circumscribed by what they call relations of 'duality and complementarity' in which the role of women is central, as in the case of the *machi* (religious authority connecting the spiritual realm with the human realm through medicine and healing). Most women engage in nature conservation and promotion of *Küme Mongen* (in Spanish, *buen vivir*, or living well), an ancestral wisdom that shapes the Mapuche way of life and upholds harmonious and balanced relationships with nature, spiritually and corporally, taking care of seeds, and the transmission of Mapuche culture and traditional medicine to children. Presently, Mapuche women are fighting alongside their husbands to assert territorial claims.

The Mapuche carry out different strategies to resist and demand human, environmental, and climate rights from the state. The Communal Association of Mapuche Communities of Loncoche, (*Asociación Comunal de Comunidades Mapuche de Loncoche*) has chosen the political

path, disputing the political power of the *winkas*⁴⁵ (non-Mapuche) and promoting and electing Mapuche councillors as effective representatives to engage with different actors to gain consensus and support. They fight to place 'their people' in positions of importance for the Indigenous struggle, such as in the Office of Indigenous Affairs. This office was created as the result of the management of a Mapuche councillor. Currently, they have a male councillor in office and a woman in charge of the Office of Indigenous Affairs.

The *Asociación Trem Trem Mapu* has chosen a different path: the promotion of *Küme Mongen* through the recovery of Mapuche health and the production and sale of agro-ecological products. These activities are generally led by women, and they already have an agreement with the Regional Health Service and the Santa Elisa Hospital in Mariquina. Here, Mapuche women train health personnel. They are currently working on building an agreement with the National Health Fund (FONASA, the public body responsible for providing health protection and coverage to users

and all those who lack resources) to support the financing of services by Mapuche specialists.

Both communities work constantly to recover Mapuche culture and identity through the rescue of the language, religious ceremonies, and traditional ancestral games such as *palin*⁴⁶ at summer schools for children, etc. They strive to defend and disseminate their worldview and alternatives through radio programs (VientoSur 2020).

Finally, an important facet of the work of the two communities is agroecological or natural production in the face of institutional impositions; "*We no longer accept glyphosate*", they state. *Asociación Trem Trem Mapu* recently opened a Mapuche cultural exhibition in the communal capital where it displays and sells its products, not only to generate economic income, but also spread *Küme Mongen* and Mapuche philosophy that puts life at the centre, recognizing the interdependence between people and communities and with nature to raise awareness in society and bring the countryside closer to the city.

⁴⁵ *Winka* is a word used in Mapudongon to indicate derogatory those who are not Mapuche.

⁴⁶ An ancestral Mapuche sport similar to hockey or Spanish *chueca*, which is played with a ball (*pali*) and a wooden stick (*weño*), between two rival teams.

Women2030 project in Chile. Colectivo Viento-Sur



5.4 The experience of agro-ecological crop diversification under irrigation in Bolivia

In the valleys of Cochabamba, Bolivia, diversified production allows different crops to be grown at different times of the year to ensure a greater diversity of foods that improve family diets, are sufficient and of high nutritional quality, and come from plots used for consumption and the sale of surpluses. Agricultural diversity gives resource-poor farmers, particularly women, greater bargaining power over time and in local and regional markets. Some plots used for annual crops, fruit trees, and greenhouses have irrigation if they are close to natural slopes or irrigation ponds known as *atajados*, which also allows for the proper management of natural resources.

In recent years, women's participation has gained greater visibility not only in the political and social spheres, but also in family agriculture. An example of this progress can be seen in the life of Evangelia Acrapi Soto of the municipality of Torotoro in the Department of Potosí, who states: *"I have apple and tumbo [banana passionfruit] plants and in my greenhouse I produce onion, tomatoes, carrots, lettuce, and several vegetables and leafy greens. Since we produce agroecologically, they grow big, and what's left over I sometimes sell to the neighbor women"*. Hers is a family of four, and often they do not need to buy food because they have all they need on their plot, which also generates income through surpluses: *"...and with the money from what I sell sometimes, I buy oil or meat, which is what we are lacking most. Here in the*

countryside we don't eat much meat, but we've been told that it's important for nutrition, that's why I buy it".

Meanwhile, in addition to farming, her husband does construction work while she takes care of the crops used to sustain the family, and when he is at home, *"we both work, tending to the crops, the greenhouse. Yesterday we were fixing our yana qocha [water reservoir with a geomembrane] because with that, we have enough*

water for irrigation. Sometimes we help family members sowing potatoes. In the countryside there is always so much work to do. We never rest." Evangelia shows us that women's work in the valleys of Bolivia is not limited to taking care of the home; she participates actively in the agricultural production of food alongside her husband, finding ways to diversify not only their production but also their income and thus ensure the family's sustainability.



Community gathering at a Women2030 project in Bolivia. CIPCA

5.5 Environmental education and women's rights projects in Brazil

Environmental education practices that consider both social and environment factors are applied in several sectors: social assistance, health, planning, sanitation, and solid waste, as well as education and environment. In Brazil, these practices are derived from sectoral public policies, particularly those discussed since 1999, which include the premises of the National Environmental Education Policy (PNEA) instituted by Law No. 9.795/1999 (GAEA, 2015).

An example of an environmental education experience is the Gender, Water, and Environmental Education (*Gênero, Água e*

Educação Ambiental or GAEA) training developed by MUPAN in 2013-2014, which was selected by UN Women to be part of the 2016 Compendium of Good Practices in Training for Gender Equality.

The project aimed to increase women's participation in these areas, focusing on homemakers, local women leaders, and women working at local health and education centres. Several workshops and meetings were held with local community leaders, students, teachers, and local government authorities. An online course focusing on gender, water, and environmental education was

agreed on as a way to boost women's participation in water management and spheres of decision-making (UN WOMEN, 2016).

Some of the course modules were: education as a means to increase participation in society; legal framework on water resources and participation/decision-making; environmental education, public policies and participation; environmental education for collective organizations; and systematization of knowledge on gender, water, and environmental education.



Promoting environmental education and women's rights in Brazil. **GEASF**

6. Conclusions and recommendations

It is increasingly recognized that sustainable development cannot be achieved without environmental and gender justice. It is also recognized that the climate crisis (and, recently, pandemics) and social injustices are directly related to deforestation, extractive industries, and current models of production and consumption created and perpetuated by the patriarchy, as demonstrated by the cases described in this assessment.

According to the FAO (2018), deforestation is the second leading cause of climate change after the burning of fossil fuels, representing 20% of greenhouse gas emissions. This is primarily the transportation sector. Between 24 and 30% of the potential mitigation total can be obtained by halting and reducing tropical deforestation. Thus, deforestation and consequent biodiversity loss is a violation of SDGs 5, 13, and 15.

Progress and changes favoring gender equality in the five LAC countries have occurred mainly in the legal and institutional realm. All five countries have ratified the main international and regional agreements ensuring respect for and observance of the political, social, economic, and cultural rights of women and girls, freedom from violence and all forms of discrimination (see Chapter 3). The various social movements, and particularly regional and national and feminist movements, have played a decisive role in the ratification of these international agreements in favor of women's demands for

gender justice, including environmental and climate justice.

However, the full exercise of these rights faces various structural, political, and domestic barriers marked by power relations that are rooted in deeply patriarchal, racist, colonial, and extractivist practices and ways of thinking (ideologies). These practices and ways of thinking impede the realization of the rights recognized by national constitutions and laws in daily life.

The legal recognition of women's rights is generating critical thinking and proactiveness in different social movements and spheres (including among women, peasants, academics, environmentalists, and humanitarians) in favour of respect for the fundamental rights of women. This is partly due to the gradual acceptance of the notion that the exercise of equal rights and the full development of women's capacities have an impact not only on the well-being of women (as a gender), but also on that of men and society in

general, as evidenced by the testimonies and cases presented in this report.

As a result of the advancement of the recognition of women's rights, in LAC countries, women are gradually assuming leadership positions and occupying positions in public office. In countries such as Bolivia – where peasant and Indigenous movements have made great political progress – there are even Indigenous women in parliament. However, as ECLAC (2014) indicates, women's increased presence in the public sector still has not led to a transformation in the discriminatory allocation of roles, labor relations, and access to basic resources. To the extent that the gender order remains unchanged, women's shift from the private sphere to the public sphere continues to be mediated by the weight of the power relations and hegemonic forms of masculinities (and interests) that feed this power.

Regarding the more specific findings at the regional level, the



Promoting environmental education and women's rights in Brazil. **GEASF**



Skill share on food sovereignty in Paraguay. **Inés Franceschelli**

results of the gender assessment highlight as a priority issue actions to stop all forms of violence to which women, girls, and Indigenous populations are subjected. Halting violence becomes essential and nearly a precondition for the full exercise of other political, economic, and socio-cultural rights. The rise in gender-based violence and femicides in LAC countries suggests that hegemonic patriarchy is so deeply entrenched in society that, more than 25 years after the adoption of international agreements such as CEDAW or the Beijing Platform for Action, the good intentions of domestic laws to combat gender-based violence are effectively invalidated.

Levels of violence are even more striking when it comes to peasant and Indigenous women because, in addition to gender discrimination, they face other forms of discrimination based on culture, race, and class. This explains the inhumane treatment faced, for example, by the Mapuche woman in Chile who was

forced to give birth in shackles in the presence of police officials. Although this case went to court, the aggressors were acquitted. Chile's domestic laws and international agreements to halt violence against women lose their validity in the case of this Indigenous woman.

Another face of patriarchal violence is the persecution and murder of leaders who defend their territories, forests, biodiversity, and rivers against extractivism. As described in section 4.4, the names of women fighters are being added each year to the endless list of crimes perpetrated by assassins hired by the promoters of extractivism, with the consent of the state.

A second aspect highlighted by the reports of the five countries is the question of the actual observance of usage rights for land and other key resources, such as water, forests, seeds, and biodiversity. While states have made progress on policies that favour land ownership for women, in practice,

the challenges faced by women require a range of interventions and dialogues at the local level to ensure that landowners can make decisions about its use and reap the benefits. These benefits clearly foster women's agency, and moreover, secure access to land serves as a precondition for eradicating poverty and is critical to the achievement of the SDGs.

A third aspect emerging from the gender assessments is that women are gaining recognition within their communities as leaders in the care and conservation of biodiversity, forests, and nature in general. Self-organized women are developing alternative responses to the advancement of monoculture plantations and other extractive industries, but also to the effects of climate change. Practices of note include agroecology, agroforestry, water harvesting, alternative livestock farming, and care for medicinal plants (see Chapter V). These practices, in addition to being sustainable alternatives for the



Local produce and crafts, Colombia. Fundaexpresión

management of productive ecosystems, are also a way to promote *buen vivir* (living well) with gender, environmental, and climate justice.

The recognition gained by women and Indigenous peoples in the conservation of biodiversity and forests is not yet reflected in VNRs on the SDGs. This absence is partly because sectoral plans related to the management of soil, water, biodiversity, and forest ecosystems have not included gender and interculturality in their objectives, actions, and budgets. This also has a negative impact on the results that are being sought in compliance with related SDGs, such as SDGs 1, 2, 5, 6, 10, 13, and 15.

While there is widespread acceptance among UN organizations, feminist civil society organizations, and academia that achieving SDG 5 is a precondition for the achievement of the other SDGs, this conviction is not yet recognized by grassroots organizations, nor by women

themselves. In this regard, Pamela Caro of the research centre CIELO believes that, *"In general, all these United Nations instruments include a contradiction, because they are important in symbolic terms, but they do not reach down into real society in the case of Chile... There is a gulf between the SDGs and real life"* (Colectivo VientoSur 2020). A contradiction also exists between what the UN preaches in relation to sustainable development with social and climate justice and what is currently occurring in communities in developing countries. While many women have undertaken initiatives that meet SDG Target 15.2 of halting deforestation by 2020 in their territories, almost all governments in Latin America have failed to meet this essential goal. In these countries, access to basic resources, the exercise of fundamental rights, and food security and sovereignty are mediated and determined by extractive industries and private interests, which are increasingly embedded in governance at all levels, including at the UN.

This partly implies the UN's complacency with regard to VNRs on the SDGs, which are *"an elegant way to disguise the actions of harmful policies"*⁴⁷; instead of advancing equitable and just coexistence in societies and between societies and nature, gigantic strides are being made towards the depletion and destruction of our planet's productive capacity, generating multiple social, environmental, and climatic conflicts. This double face of the UN and other international organizations that promote sustainable development is partly explained by the excessive funding and subsidies given to extractive industries (see section 4.8), monoculture plantations, industrial livestock farming, and mega-infrastructure.

⁴⁷ In Chile's second Voluntary National Report (2019), for example, mentioned in regards to the "situation of Araucanía" is the search for "solutions based on dialogue, reparation, recognition, progress and respect for the rule of law" (p. 36) versus the reality of violence and dispossession already mentioned.

Recommendations

Policies that aim to foster gender equality should recognize that women and Indigenous communities, including women's organizations and movements, face various structural, political and sociocultural barriers to implement the 'good will' of institutional reforms. In countries such as those of Latin America, these barriers are intertwined with colonial practices of accumulation by dispossession; gender ethnic, and racial discrimination; corruption; and lack of accountability. This dispossession goes beyond resource deprivation, as it affects the *raison d'être* of people's identities linked to their territory and history.

Gender equality policies should acknowledge the fact that gender injustice and violence against women are clearly linked to environmental injustices such as biodiversity loss and deforestation, soil degradation, water scarcity and pollution, appropriation of local seeds and traditional knowledge, and eviction from protected areas. Although women are organizing and fighting to overcome these injustices, continuous threats and challenges undermine their resilience.

Public policies regarding women should not only be directed at women as mothers and wives, but also as agents of change at all political, economic, social, and cultural levels. We must stop affirming and romanticizing the notion that women have a natural, inherent capacity to care for children and spouses, since these social constructions justify, in part, the confinement of women to the domestic sphere.

All forms of violence against women, girls, and Indigenous peoples must be urgently eradicated. More effective laws must be established at the local level that punish not only the perpetrators of violence, but also the institutions (courts, police, and other bodies) that enable the perpetrators.

Laws against domestic violence must mainstream interculturality, which would allow for special but equitable treatment for Indigenous women (and men) who approach the relevant bodies to report cases of violence. The inclusion of interculturality would also allow changes in judicial systems (which are based solely on sanction and punishment) oriented toward the prevention of violence through campaigns and training to foster cultural transformations (Mercado *et al.*, 2015, cited by VientoSur 2020).

Policies and proposals for gender equality must make women's reproductive work visible and valued from an economic rights approach given that this work contributes to the development of national economies and sustains the functioning of society as a whole.

The alternative responses that women and their organizations are developing in the face of patriarchy must be strengthened by disseminating and replicating these practices through exchanges of experience and knowledge. This also promotes solidarity among women from different cultures and the 'sowing' of alternatives for *buen vivir* (living well), which contributes significantly to the conservation and restoration of forests.



Group photo, Women2030 project in Bolivia. CIPCA

National development plans, including cross-sectoral plans, must include gender budgets for the implementation, oversight, monitoring and evaluation of gender equality plans and SDGs. Significant increases in investments are required to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in developing countries. Collectively, donors and partners must maximize both the quality and quantity of funding for SDG 5 on gender equality.

The Mapuche people require constitutional recognition that will enable them to validate their autonomous forms of organization within the framework of multiculturalism and plurinationality set out in ILO Convention 169.

States must be called on to stop the persecution, violence, and murder of environmental leaders. Effective laws and sanctions are needed to punish direct and indirect perpetrators.

The immediate demilitarization of Indigenous communities and territories must take place and their right to self-determination must be recognized by the different international and regional human rights agreements. There must be greater international pressure on states in this regard.

In view of the expansion of mega-projects and extractive industries, communities and specifically peasant women's groups demand that states consult women before granting concessions. At a minimum, states must respect prior consultation under ILO Convention 169, which they have ratified.

We must require governments, free trade agreements, and banks to stop subsidizing dirty and harmful programs and projects that force Mother Earth and its inhabitants to produce beyond the limits of productive capacity. This destroys not only forests, rivers, and soil ecosystems, but also the identity and dignity of peoples.

Parallel work is needed between communities and superstructures such as the United Nations to specifically address local needs through effective participatory methodologies. The United Nations must reach into the territories to monitor what is stated in the SDGs. It cannot simply accept the self-satisfied VNRs of governments that violate the rights of women and peoples every day. Funding that is not yet focused on gender equality must be aligned, as a first step, with a minimum standard of 'do no harm'. Most funding of all types does not yet involve a gender perspective and, in fact, can harm gender equality and women's empowerment.



Group photo, Women2030 project in Chile. Colectivo VientoSur

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Annex

Testimony collected by CCIMCAT-Bolivia**Pseudonym for research purposes:** Ely Arari**Age:** 54 years**Community:** Chimeo, Bolivia**Basic information:** Mother of three children. The Chimeo community is part of the municipality of Villamontes in the province of Gran Chaco in Tarija and has been processing its TCO titling for 16 years. Land in Chimeo is parcelled in productive units called chacos. Most of these parcels consist of two hectares and are part of the Assembly of the Guaraní People.

Paragraphs taken from the interview on 13 October 2018:

I have worked my chaco alone for nine years since my husband went to Argentina, and since that time, I alone have been in charge of the chaco. This land was given to us by the community; my husband is the one who signed everything with respect to our chaco. We have been handed over two hectares per family... it's fine, lack of water and the heat don't allow you to work more land, why would we need more if we don't have water? Some have more land, they have been buying from families, some no longer want to work the land and give it back to the community or sell it. The lack of water hurts us a lot, there are years when nothing comes out because of the drought. That's why my husband went away to work.

It is very hard work, I get up at five in the morning to leave food cooked for my children, I feed the animals and irrigate my little garden, then I go to the chaco. I have to go before the sun gets too hot, otherwise the heat keeps you from working, here we work as long as we can stand the heat. I

have three little children, the older one helps me, but I want them to study and get out of here, to do better than me.

My husband has not returned since he left nine years ago. At first, he called and sent money, but then he forgot... [sadly] I know he already has another woman and has little children with her... but here in the community they don't need to know that he's going around with another woman. I tell them he is going to come back soon, otherwise they can take away my chaco, they have to believe that Raul is going to come back and that he is still my husband... That's how it has to be for me. I'm afraid that they'll think Raul is no longer coming back and leave me without land.

This happened to Doña Asunta when her husband died; they let her keep the land for three years, but she was too old to work it, so they told her son to take her to Yacuiba and leave the land for other families. My children are still young, I have to keep working...

[worried] What will become of them if they take away my chaco?

I grow corn and beans to sell. A woman comes from La Paz in her car and takes the corn and beans. I sell to the butcher shop. For my consumption, I have my little garden that the project [an NGO] has helped me make. There I plant my vegetables for the house, and it helps with the pigs. I raise three pigs to sell at the end of the year, one pig for each child.

When the interviewee was consulted about her children's right of access, mainly that of her daughter, she replied that the community is in charge of distributing the land:

Yes, one of my children works my chaco and I can't do it anymore, they're going to give it to him, if the others leave the community, they no longer have the right to receive land... in the case of my daughter, when she marries, she will receive land. Here, the land is distributed to families, not single people.

