



Gender into Urban Climate Change Initiative

Policy recommendations for local and national

Gender Responsive Urban Climate Policies

Mexican Experience



*Policy Recommendations for Local and National
Gender Responsive Urban Climate Policies
The Mexican Experience*

Gender Equity: Citizenship, Work and Family A.C. 2022

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The following recommendations are built on the **premise that if attention to the structural inequality between women and men in the unequal distribution of unpaid domestic and care work is omitted, it will not be possible to advance equality between women and men in urban climate change policies.**

For this reason, some of them are presented for one level of incidence but are not limited to this one.

I. Policy recommendations addressing national and regional governments on how to guide and support cities to integrate gender into urban climate policy.

So far, the most extensive work on gender and climate change has been carried out highlighting the links between adaptation and gender, particularly by making visible the impacts in rural areas, or in those measures of social programs that have women as their target population. This leaves as a challenge other crucial spaces that have a structural and direct relationship with the generation of the climate change phenomenon, such as urban areas and their productive links with the sectors that generate the greatest GHG. With the purpose of overcome this vision, **national and regional governments must support cities:**

Strengthening harmonization between gender equality policy and climate change within the framework of the various international, regional, and national instruments that guide (and, where appropriate, mandate) the design of comprehensive policies that articulate gender equality and climate change as cross-cutting issues.

Going beyond from the gender or women enunciation to official regulations and methodologies that lead to move towards effective implementation in all the sectors related to climate change and urban planning. This implies developing structural analyses that do not remain in restricted response schemes (yes/no) and going forward checking account gender power relations, and overcoming the work focused on the institutional / organizational culture within the ministries that lead climate action to focus on their duties.

Recognizing that urban climate policies must move urgently through the traditional model of Women in Development (WID), which proposes policies for women in terms of poverty, welfare, and economic efficiency, **to the guarantee of women's rights,** focused on the analysis of power relations between genders and the sexual division of labor, a preparatory condition for the eventual design of public policy with a gender perspective, and in particular of adaptation climate policies.

Recognizing that women are not the object of integration or incorporation into climate policies but are conceived in their broad human diversity as active subjects of their own lives, with autonomy and dignity and with their own needs and interests within the framework of their gender condition and situation. In terms of analysis, this means thinking about where they are, what are the conditions, how they occupy them, what resources they have and what they have access to, and even where they are not, questioning their absence in decision-making spaces and those with the greatest economic and political power, as well as identifying and highlighting the causes of this absence.

Promoting greater inter-institutional articulation with the objective of generating a national and comprehensive gender climate policy which requires the **linkage between the regulatory framework, the Annual Operational Plan (AOP)** (describes the activities and budgets for each of the outputs and output indicators included in the Annual Performance Plan and can be developed for an institution and/or for branches or programs within an institution) -in which gender equality is integrated-, **and institutional capacities.**

Performing coordinated work between different levels of government and secretariats/ministries, not only those related to climate change or mechanisms for the advancement of women. Emphasizing the advantages of the alliance with civil society and the different levels of government, which promotes dialogue, the exchange of experiences and the identification of methodologies applied at the local level.

II. Key policy recommendations addressing national governments on how to integrate gender into national climate policy.

At the national level the key entry points are related to the national capacity of allocate resources and design long term planification documents, so that it is imperative:

Train governments on gender budgeting and climate change. The gender technical experience shows that this is the most effective and transcending way to incorporate gender into public policies, as they are a tool that strengthens transparency and accountability. Also, it is essential that actions for the systemic reduction of gender inequality gaps in climate change have sufficient public resources for their design, implementation, and evaluation.

Doing this work requires technical effort for each of the budgetary paths linking institutional mandates through the Annual Operational Plan:

- **The government budgetary scheme**, referring to normative and technical instruments for public finance such as the national budget annual resolution which setting spending limits and distribution, specific budgetary allocations in the way of annexes, articles of general and transitional laws, and budget classifiers according to mandatory spending. Instruments that represent an institutional basis that promote transparency and accountability on gender equality across the budgetary normative **shielding with the principles of irreducibility (prevents the reduction of amounts from the immediately preceding period), non-transferability (prevents the change of programs aimed at gender equality) and, eventually, progressiveness in terms of human rights which embrace more resources and outcomes.** Given the structural nature of inequality between women and men, the gradual nature of the gender cross-cutting process requires the constant development and expansion of qualitative gender components.
- **The programmatic approach** (integrating content at all policy levels national, sectoral, subnational and local operational plans, as well as in programs and projects). It is proposed as a strategy of concrete and defined actions to integrate the operation plan, with the objective of going beyond the mere enunciation of gender integration as a cross-cutting axis and the abstract notions that so far have hindered implementation. Attention should be paid to ensuring that the Climate Change Plans at the different levels of

government include concrete gender actions and, equally important, that the Equality Plan at the different levels of government incorporates the climate change agenda with concrete actions. It means not just the what even the how.

- **Institutional capacity building.** Although this has been the most constant activity, if it does not consider all the technical aspects of the process of budgetary allocation, it will be not enough. Therefore, governments need to strengthen the design and implementation of diagnoses, instruments, and indicators with a gender perspective, as well as the qualitative analysis of power relations between all the diversity of women and men.
- **Accountability (external monitoring and evaluation).** It is essential to follow up on gender equality spending in the climate change agenda, because it has not been possible to overcome the barrier of relating the budget with a gender perspective as an exclusive women's issue, prevailing the distribution of resources without diagnostic foundations on the inequality gaps between women and men; consequently, it is necessary to alert that, while it is necessary to increase public financing, the only quantitative increase does not mean that the resources are being distributed better and have a positive impact on gender equality.

Avoid familism as an input to any public policy regarding its gender discriminatory impact.

Directing resources to the households or families and taking it as the unit of measurement (target population) omitted the power differences inside; the divergent development of women and men throughout their life cycle, and maintain invisible the autonomy, rights and involvement in the sector of each of the family/household members. Governments, civil society, and community-based initiatives whose climate action start from this criterion should review it in depth to avoid strengthen inequalities.

Prevent generating extra burdens for women of unpaid domestic and care work with climate policies linked to environmental care work.

To keep away from the reproduction of gender inequalities, it must be clearly recognized that women are not the mothers of "earth" and we must warn against the tendency to add to them the responsibility for it in unpaid domestic and care work, which also happens with the notions of "food security rescuers", "safeguards of biodiversity" and all sorts of semantic fields related to the care of the people and the planet. Therefore, these concepts should be articulated within the framework of human rights and gender equality, and with criteria of environmental sustainability. If these links are not taken care of, there is a risk of producing discriminatory impacts.

Generate information focused on gender power relations. The design of qualitative indicators that account for the unequal relations between women and men in a comparative framework is required for going forward what is usually done in climate data: incorporating women only as a variable and generating inputs to describe the coverage of the specific actions/programs. What it is insufficient to determine the differentiated impact on people's daily lives.

Strengthen transparency and accountability. It is essential to strengthen the schemes for the generation, analysis, and socialization of disaggregated data. Statistics design and recollection must consider the situation of women and men according to sex, age, social class, disability, ethnicity, location and geographic condition, and other relevant conditions. Each institution linked to urban climate actions must have sufficient budget and technical capacities by itself to prepare

diagnoses that identify, based on its duties/obligations, the inequality gaps, and the level of incidence it has to reverse them. Likewise, **official data and relevant information about climate policies must be easily accessible, transparent, and constantly updated for the socialization between citizens and not just for governments or specialists.**

III. Policy recommendations on how to integrate gender into urban climate policy addressing cities, as well as city associations and networks.

Climate policies have the challenge of rethinking the design of cities that overcomes productive, colonial, and androcentric visions, where **the center is the social reproduction of life with social and environmental integrity.** Under this premise it is proposed:

Design cooperative plans and joint public financing by bigger urban areas such as metropolitan areas, which implies conceiving the urban experience beyond geographic and political boundaries to put at the center the differentiated needs and experience of living in the city of women and men in all their diversity across their life cycle.

Overcome the sectorized view of gender in urban climate policies only in the field of women's urban security. Although these actions are necessary, **women's urban experience is also affected by the sexual division of labor,** which necessarily implies designing actions in all areas of urban life, including the initial efforts for an energetic productive reconversion towards a **just transition.** A gendered narrative developed in urban planning and mobility policies must link the issue of **gender-based violence, sexual and reproductive rights, unpaid domestic and care work, and climate change.**

Consider the social, economic, and environmental architecture of cities, this implies the recognition of the differences and similarities between cities across the globe and in the same country, acknowledging the possibilities, levels, and time of intervention:

- In the case of advanced cities that have a specific Gender Climate Change Action Plan or Climate Change Action Plan, even in those that have made some progress in naming the gender perspective as a cross-cutting issue, it is recommended to **specify in each of the program components the gender dimension that is being addressed, the inequality gap to be solved, the background of the problem, the population to be served, population coverage, accessibility and sustainability mechanisms for women compared to men, differentiated requirements for women and men, gender-based indicators, accessible dissemination mechanisms, gender monitoring and evaluation, among others.** All above with the aim of dismantle the equivalence of gender policies with only the record of coverage of women served in each policy, program, or action.
- In the case of less advanced cities that do not have an official Climate Plan, it is suggested that the Annual Operational Program **include gender-responsive actions across climate, urban and other related sectors, showing their interrelationship** and listing the feasible aspects mentioned in the previous point.

IV. Key recommendations on the linkage climate change, pandemic, and gender.

Climate change must not only be understood as an essentially technological and market issue, but also include various fields, such as public health and One Health approach.

Update the design, planning, operation, and evaluation of climate actions according to the emergency, because due to the sexual division of labor, it is the extraction of the value and time of women's work, particularly their unpaid domestic and care work, that sustains life, guarantees the well-being of the population, subsidizes economic growth, and cushions the multiple crises, including climate and health crises:

- As women are the largest proportion of beneficiaries in social policies, a reduction in them because of the reallocation of resources due the pandemic response directly impacts women's lives, as they are the ones who have a greater proportion of income resulting from government programs.
- By removing the public and exemption of basic services such as electricity or water, few people will have access to them via the market, and this does not limit the urgent need to access them, women, the most affected as they do not have the income (or incentives) to be able to pay for these goods and services, substitute their absence with more unpaid work.
- The reduction in the public supply of care goods and services has a cost that is passed on to communities and households where, due to the sexual division of labor, it falls especially on women and therefore prevents a fair redistribution of care work.
- Women make up a significant proportion of public employment, so the cuts also affect them as salaried workers, as they are oriented towards a decrease in the wage cost in labor-intensive jobs such as education or health, where there is a concentration of women as workers.

Given that cities have been the spaces most affected by the current Covid pandemic, it is urgent to rethink the design of cities that currently favors productive dynamics, thus compromising the well-being of the people and the planet.

Responses to the current crisis should be oriented in a planned way to respond to the diversity of situations of women and men articulated with social class, gender, age, ethnic ascription, geographic location, among other conditions; and not to think of people in a homogeneous way. Failure to take these considerations into account will exacerbate existing inequalities, such as all the above.

This project is part of the International Climate Initiative (IKI). The German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) supports this initiative on the basis of a decision adopted by the German Bundestag.

Supported by:



**Federal Ministry
for the Environment, Nature Conservation
and Nuclear Safety**

based on a decision of the German Bundestag