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Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development from the gender perspective

Mainstreaming Gender in Sustainable Development Goals in Latin America and the Caribbean

Note by ECLAC Division of Gender Affairs*

Abstract

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development establishes a transformative vision towards economic, social and environmental sustainability with gender equality as a central pillar for achieving the sustainable development by 2030. Gender equality is also a cross-cutting theme through the whole Agenda.

In accordance to this framework, Latin America and the Caribbean's governments decided to take action and agreed during the thirteenth Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean the Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030. This Strategy is a regional political commitment that aims at guiding the full implementation of the agreements adopted by countries on the Regional Gender Agenda and to make them the road map for achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the regional level from the perspective of gender equality and women's autonomy and human rights. This Agenda is synergic to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Thus, the commitments made in both of them should be understood as complementary to address the structural challenges and priorities of Latin America and the Caribbean. Also, the actions taken to accomplish both the Regional Gender Agenda and the 2030 Agenda should be articulated with the commitments acquired in both of them.

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NOTE: The designations employed in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

It is crucial to identify possible tensions between the goals and targets in order to prevent progress in some SDGs from being made through means that may obstruct the achievement of goals and targets linked to gender equality and women and girls' rights (Bidegain, 2017). For that, it is crucial to mainstreaming gender in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

I. The 2030 Agenda and the Regional Gender Agenda

A. Agenda for Sustainable Development

1. In September 2015, during the Seventieth Session of the United Nations General Assembly, the UN member States adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This international commitment establishes 17 SDGs and 169 targets that aim at ending poverty, fight inequalities, tackle climate change and reach sustainable development worldwide by the year 2030.
2. The 2030 Agenda encompasses the three dimensions of the sustainable development – economic, social and environmental –, emphasizing that the goals and targets are integrated and indivisible (United Nations, 2015, para. 5). In contrast to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the SDGs attempt to not only end poverty, but also reduce inequalities within and among countries. “Leaving no-one behind” guides every goal of the 2030 Agenda. In line with this framework, no country is 100% equal and not one of them has reached sustainable development, thus, the 2030 Agenda is universal. It is important to mention that this principle does not mean the responsibilities are the same for every country. It recognizes that each country, depending on if it is developed or developing, has different commitments to achieving sustainable development by 2030.
3. The Resolution of the Seventieth Session of the United Nations General Assembly contains a preamble and a declaration that establishes the 17 SDGs and its targets, the shared principles and commitments and a call for action to change our world (United Nations, 2015). Additionally, when compared with the past MDGs, the document also includes the means of implementation to reach the SDGs. It is associated with the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development once they establish the tools and cooperation mechanisms needed to provide support to the developing countries (Bidegain, 2017). Finally, the document ends with a section on follow-up and review at the national, regional and global level. The 2030 Agenda’s most unique contribution is its potential to promote an integrated and systemic approach of the sustainable development. It challenges us to further our understanding of concepts that account for the multidimensionality of development processes and their contribution to eradicate inequalities.
4. Gender equality and women and girls’ rights and empowerment play a central role in the 2030 Agenda. It is explicit across the whole agenda. It is present in the declaration, in the Sustainable Development Goals and corresponding targets, in the means of implementation and Global Partnership and in the follow-up and review, and in the proposed indicators for measuring progress (Bidegain, 2017).
5. The Declaration establishes that: “realizing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls will make a crucial contribution to progress across all the Goals and targets. The achievement of full human potential and of sustainable development is not possible if one half of humanity continues to be denied its full human rights and opportunities. (...)The systematic mainstreaming of a gender perspective in the implementation of the Agenda is crucial” (United Nations, 2015 para. 20).

6. The 2030 Agenda recognizes that empowering women and girls has a multiplier effect on the achievement of all the goals and targets. Consequently, the gender perspective must be inserted in the whole Agenda and guide the implementation of policies based on this framework, so the structural barriers that prevent women's autonomy can be transformed to allow the gender equity. According to the Executive Secretary of ECLAC, Alicia Bárcena (2017), "when we look at the 2030 Agenda from a women's rights perspective, we propose a transformative look of development in order to successfully face the demographic transition, the growing urbanization and climate change, among other ongoing processes, and we aim at accomplishing concrete achievements by increasing the number of women with own and sufficient income, breaking the glass ceiling and walls, making personal and working life compatible for men and women, socializing care work and overcoming the poverty of time. It is about integrating gender equality in an integral way because, otherwise, it cannot be considered neither development nor sustainable."
7. In addition to be embedded in the majority of the goals and be a cross-cutting theme on the Agenda as a whole, gender equality is also there as a specific standalone goal, the SDG 5 "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls". In this goal, the targets are oriented toward the end of all forms of discrimination and violence against all women and girls (target 5.1, 5.2, 5.3); recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work (5.4); ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities at all levels of decision-making (5.5); ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights (5.6).
8. Furthermore, the SDG 5 includes three targets related to the means of implementation, geared to facilitate the carry out of the targets 5.1 to 5.6. They refer to undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic and natural resources (5.a); enhance the use of enabling technology (5.b); adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls (5.c).

B. The Regional Gender Agenda

9. In this framework of global concern and commitment to overcome gender inequalities through the 2030 Agenda, it is important to point out that its declaration establishes Goals and targets that are to be implemented at both national and regional, as well as global levels. Furthermore, it recognizes that each country has different approaches, visions, models and tools for achieving sustainable development, and that each government will decide how to incorporate the global targets into its national planning processes, policies and strategies (United Nations, 2015a). The SDGs cannot embrace all the specific needs of each country or/and region, therefore, it should be supplemented by regional agreements to address the region's structural challenges (Bidegain, 2017).
10. In Latin America and the Caribbean, instruments and actions have been taken into progress towards women's autonomy and equality complementing and deepening the SDGs according to regional priorities and challenges (ECLAC, 2017a). It refers to the Regional Gender Agenda, the outcome of the work of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean since its first meeting in 1977 in Havana, Cuba, to the latest Conference in Montevideo, Uruguay in 2016 (ECLAC, 2016b). The Regional Gender Agenda guides the countries toward the sustainable development through a gender equality perspective and the women's human rights and autonomy. It is reinforced and supplemented by agreements assumed on other Regional Conferences (Population and Development, Statistics, Social Development, Environment), as well as UN Conferences platforms and plans of action (Beijing, CEDAW, Belem do Para Convention). This regional framework is an ambitious, profound and comprehensive agenda agreed multilaterally. The political will, the active participation of the feminist and women's movement and the support of the entire United Nations system have been central elements for its elaboration and implementation at the national level.

11. Latin America and the Caribbean is the only region in the world where, since 1977, countries have been meeting regularly to make policy commitments to eradicating discrimination against women and girls and gender inequality, and move towards the guarantee of full enjoyment of women and girls' autonomy and human rights. Over the course of those forty years of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, a wide range of studies and works have been undertaken, which involved government commitments of different types. On those studies is possible to find a degree of conceptual unity that reflected in the States' agreements which form the regional gender agenda (ECLAC, 2016). According to ECLAC (2016), the agreements can be grouped together in three categories: (i) public policy approaches that mark the way the different problems faced by women in attaining their autonomy and exercising their rights are viewed, together with the corresponding policy proposals; (ii) implementation pillars that reflect measures related to public policies that can help speed up changes towards gender equality; and (iii) the issues on which the agreements focus and that reflect the problems to be addressed, with their challenges in terms of diagnostic assessments and the barriers to be overcome. The three categories of agreement clearly imply commitments for the machineries for the advancement of women and, increasingly, commitments that engage other actors, such as parliaments, sectoral ministries and public institutions of different types, as well as other regional and global mechanisms and entities. Additionally, an analysis of the discourse of the regional gender agenda reveals five action-oriented areas of focus, which can be summarized as: (i) gender equality; (ii) women's human rights; (iii) intersectionality and interculturality; (iv) parity-based, representative and participatory democracy, and secularism; and (v) sustainable and inclusive development (ECLAC, 2016).
12. The most recent product of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean was the Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030, adopted in 2016 (ECLAC, 2016b). This agreement goes beyond the Agenda 2030. For example, while SDG 5 refers to valuing care, the Regional Gender Agenda establishes commitments to overcome the sexual division of labour and promote care as a right. In addition, to ensure the full and effective participation of women and equal opportunities, it proposes to build parity democracies in the region. On another level, the Regional Gender Agenda not only recognize the reproductive rights of women, but also agree measures to protect and guarantee the full exercise of the sexual rights of all people, without discrimination. It also recognizes that it is necessary to transform the patriarchal and violent cultural patterns and the culture of privilege to end discrimination and all forms of violence against women and girls.
13. According to ECLAC (2016d), the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development represents a consensus on the need to search for a new development paradigm. Nonetheless, progress on this front faces three key challenges: (i) the lack of a clear mention of its means of implementation in an appropriate institutional and global governance framework; (ii) the analysis of how the Sustainable Development Goals are interconnected and related to the economic variables that condition them; and (iii) the need for these objectives to be promoted as part of a new economic policy based on compacts between the State, the market and society, and under new international and national coalitions (ECLAC, 2016).
14. The Regional Gender Agenda offers mechanisms for moving forward on each of these three fronts, based on a pioneering analysis: first, because each of the agreement documents includes reflections on the means of implementation capable of sustaining the development of transformative policies in the countries; second, because the intersectional approach is inherent to addressing gender equality. This is because that the approach focuses on the multiple discriminations that interlock and reinforce each other, and on the historical inequality that has affected women, particularly those belonging to indigenous and Afro-descendent peoples, those who are in situations of poverty or those living in rural or marginal urban areas. Here, the interconnection between development factors and objectives is undeniable. The third reason is that the process of constructing this agenda has strengthened the argument that the current conditions of inequality can be changed only in the framework of robust

compacts between the State, the market and society, which, in partnerships that include families in particular, aim at dismantling and reorganize the way the costs and benefits of well-being and development have been distributed. In this regard, the regional gender agenda's track record can contribute tools for advancing the debate in individual countries on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. It also serves as a safeguard, avoiding an exclusively objectives-focused view of development, which could result in the simplification of the commitments on equality and women's rights already agreed upon by the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, or in the generation of selection bias in the commitments, thus ignoring the multidimensional nature of development. For example, commitments that have already been assumed at the regional level include guaranteeing comprehensive sexual education, non-discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity, and protection of women human rights defenders, as well as ensuring sufficient and sustainable resources to finance gender equality policies. These commitments must be implemented in a way that goes beyond what is explicitly laid down in the Sustainable Development Goals (ECLAC, 2016).

C. Proposal to mainstream the goals of the Sustainable Development Goals based on the Regional Gender Agenda

15. On the basis of the Regional Gender Agenda, figure I.1 summarizes the orientation of mainstreaming policies in the Sustainable Development Goals, according to accrued knowledge and the agreed language on the 2030 Agenda's resolution. An analysis was made to identify how women's rights and gender equality are present on goals and targets (ECLAC, 2016). The targets corresponding to each SDG are grouped into four categories with a different colour each.
16. The colour purple indicates explicit targets on gender equality or women's rights. The language used refers to "women" and "girls", "universal access", or "equal access", or else the target is defined as "for all". In light purple we have the targets which gender equality or women's rights are implicit. Even though these targets do not refer specifically to women and girls in their formulation and language, they are essential for achieving gender equality and ensuring the fulfilment of rights in Latin America and the Caribbean given the characteristics of the inequality matrices and development patterns prevailing in the region. These targets refer to the "eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices" (target 10.3), or encouraging "the formalization and growth of micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises" (target 8.3)". In some cases, the related indicators call for information disaggregated by sex (for example, indicators 8.3.1 and 8.9.2). Other targets, shown in green, create the necessary structural conditions (although they are not sufficient on their own) for progress towards gender equality and women's rights in Latin America and the Caribbean and to bring about a shift towards sustainable and egalitarian development patterns. These targets must be implemented taking gender equality and women's rights into consideration if they are to be successful in reducing equality gaps. For example, global economic and financial governance, financial and trade flows and technology transfer could either be put to the service of the Sustainable Development Goals, women's rights and gender equality, or, conversely, they could obstruct the fulfilment of these aims. Considering the indivisible and interlinked nature of the 2030 Agenda, efforts must be made to link the green targets with the purple ones. Finally, targets shown in white are related to gender equality and women's rights either indirectly or mediated by other variables (ECLAC, 2016).

Figure I.1

Proposal for mainstreaming the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the language agreed upon in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), *Equality and Women's Autonomy in the Sustainable Development Agenda* (LC/G.2686/Rev.1), Santiago, 2016, figure I.1.

- This is a proposal for analysing the degree to which the gender perspective has been mainstreamed into the Sustainable Development Goals as well as for gaining a better understanding of the interconnections between the targets and the relevance of each one to achieving gender equality in Latin America and the Caribbean. Specific considerations can be made with respect to each group, allowing for further analytical classification.

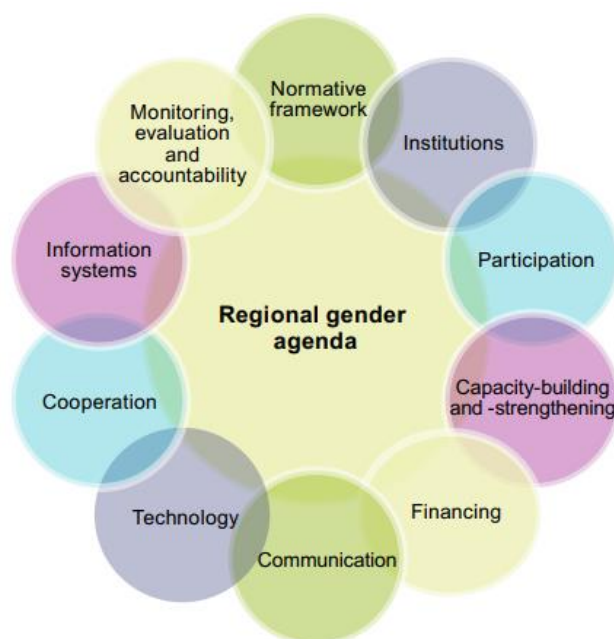
II. The Montevideo Strategy

- During the Thirteenth Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean in 2016 in Montevideo, States decided to take action and agreed by consensus the Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030. This Strategy is a regional political commitment that aims at guiding the full implementation of the agreements adopted by countries on the Regional Gender Agenda, and to make them the road map for achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the regional level from the perspective of gender equality and women's autonomy and human rights. Thus, it is a political and technical instrument that will support a qualitative leap towards the implementation and strengthening of multidimensional and comprehensive public policies that ensure the fulfilment of human rights and women's autonomy and the achievement of gender equality in Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC, 2016c).

19. The Montevideo Strategy redefines the role of the State in equality policies. It recognizes the leadership of machineries for the advancement of women and proposes measures to overcome the main obstacles to institutionalizing gender equality and women's rights in State structures. It also recognizes the region's heterogeneity, the special needs and particular challenges facing the countries in their differences. It is directed towards all those who face gender discrimination in Latin America and the Caribbean and its implementation will benefit all women, regardless of age, income, sexual orientation, gender identity, territory of residence, migratory status, race or ethnic origin, or physical or mental capacity (ECLAC, 2016c).
20. For this successfully happen, the measures require the active participation of the sectoral ministries, the planning and budgeting entities, the decentralized agencies, the Parliaments and the Judicial power, among other governmental actors. It also claims for the participation of the civil society in all its diversity and the contribution of the private sector, specially the business sector.
21. These measures will guide sectoral and cross-cutting public policies, strengthening them to ensure the autonomy and full exercise of the human rights of all women and girls, ending discrimination, prejudice and all forms of resistance. In order to achieve gender equality, it is necessary to overcome certain structural challenges entrenched in the current unequal power relations in Latin America and the Caribbean. The structural challenges to be overcome include: (i) socioeconomic inequality and the persistence of poverty; (ii) discriminatory, violent and patriarchal cultural patterns and the predominance of a culture of privilege; (iii) the sexual division of labour and the unfair social organization of care; and (iv) the concentration of power and hierarchical relations in the public sphere (ECLAC, 2016c). These challenges exacerbate each other and generate complex socioeconomic, cultural and belief systems that hinder and reduce the scope of policies on gender equality and women's autonomy.
22. The Montevideo Strategy is aimed at giving effect to the pillars for the implementation of public policies that will help to eliminate gender inequalities and to guarantee the human rights and autonomy of women in all their diversity. The 10 Strategy's implementation pillars (diagram II.1) were set out together with 74 measures; they can all be adapted to the priorities and needs of individual countries and included in sustainable development plans for application at different levels (national, subnational, local, regional and international). This multi-scale approach seeks to reduce inequality within and among countries. The level at which measures are implemented will depend on the political and administrative structure of each country, while regional and international measures will be carried out jointly by intergovernmental bodies at those levels (ECLAC, 2016c).

Diagram II.1

Implementation pillars of the agreements of Montevideo Strategy



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), *Equality and Women’s Autonomy in the Sustainable Development Agenda* (LC/G.2686/Rev.1), Santiago, 2016, diagram I.4.

23. There are multiple synergies between the implementation pillars of Montevideo Strategy and the means of implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. First, the means of implementation for Goal 17 (“Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for development”), particularly those relating to “financing and systemic issues” are taken up again in implementation pillars 5 and 8 (financing and cooperation). Moreover, the means of implementation “technology” is reconsidered in implementation pillar 7 (technology). Lastly, means of implementation “capacity-building” is incorporated in regional implementation pillars 2 and 4 (institutions, and capacity-building and -strengthening). Both implementation proposals emphasize the strengthening of “information systems”, and “monitoring, evaluation and accountability” (pillars 9 and 10). The implementation pillars of the Montevideo Strategy go slightly further and highlight three fundamental means for the full and effective implementation of public policies on equality in Latin America and the Caribbean, namely “normative framework”, “participation” and “communication” (pillars 1, 3 and 6) (ECLAC, 2016a).
24. As the 2030 Agenda draws on lessons learned from the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals to prioritize the construction of disaggregated data, the Montevideo Agenda considers information systems and the strengthening of gender statistics and indicators as another implementation pillar of public policies on equality (pillar 9). In this regard, it not only propose new alternatives, but it also questions both the androcentric indicators normally used to define and calculate poverty or a country’s GDP, or to identify economically active persons, and also the consequent development policy decisions that those indicators imply (ECLAC, 2016a).
25. Lastly, the Montevideo Strategy measures allow mitigating the possible vicious circles of the SDGs. For example, in order to prevent fiscal policies from deepening gender inequality and women's poverty, it is urged to adopt progressive fiscal policies from a gender perspective. In this regard, it is agreed to improve the tax collection of the groups that concentrate the highest levels of income and

wealth in order to have more resources for gender equality policies (ECLAC, 2016c, measures 5.a, 5.c and 5.h). In essence, it is necessary to have an expanded vision of the targets of the implementation of SDG 5 and complement it with the SDG 17 and the measures of the Montevideo Strategy's pillars of implementation to ensure that they contribute significantly to the achievement of equality of gender and women and girls' rights and autonomy in Latin America and the Caribbean. The asymmetries in global governance, the financing gaps and the challenges to translate the normative and institutional advances of the countries of the region in the changing living conditions of women require an integrated vision of the means of implementation of both agendas.

III. The Regional Architecture

26. The Division for Gender Affairs of ECLAC plays an important role on the process towards equality between men and women, promoting gender mainstreaming within regional development to overcome the obstacles of gender equality in Latin America and the Caribbean. The Division works as technical secretariat to the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean in collaboration with the Office of the Secretary of the Commission. Also, it organizes two meetings of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean each year. The Division works closely with national machineries for the advancement of women in the region, provides technical cooperation to the governments and assists the countries in the development of strategies for mainstreaming the gender perspective in public policies, including their formulation, implementation and monitoring, using statistics and gender indicators. It fosters the exchange of experiences and best practices among countries in the region and also conducts research and generates knowledge with a view to promoting gender equality in public policymaking.
27. Also, the Division works as technical secretariat to the Working Group on Gender Statistics of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC. The Montevideo Strategy calls for strengthening the link between the mechanisms for the advancement of women and the national statistics offices within the framework of the Working Group to produce, systematize and use official national disaggregated data to create indicators for the follow-up of international commitments, especially the Sustainable Development Goals, and to stimulate and support the design and strengthening of gender equality observatories at national level (pillar 9). The Working Group aims at bringing together those who produce gender statistics and those who use it. Achieving a common language, shared knowledge and empathy regarding the needs and restrictions of information is crucial to make good use of them. During the last decade, the national statistical offices, have shown receptivity to the information demands of the mechanisms for the advancement of women and other organizations in most of the countries
28. The Working Group recognizes the contribution of the Gender Equality Observatory in Latin America and the Caribbean and encourages the efforts to strengthen it as well as to improve data sources and promote national statistical capacity, among other things, through technical assistance. The Gender Equality Observatory in Latin America and the Caribbean was established following a request made by governments and it has become a major reference point for gender statistics and indicators, as well as studies, analysis and public policies on gender in the region. The Observatory maintains an extensive repository of laws, policies and reports. Its approach is based on the concept of autonomy, a fundamental factor in ensuring women's human rights within the context of full equality, which consists in: women's control over their own bodies (physical autonomy), generation of their own income and resources (economic autonomy) and full participation in decisions that affect their lives individually and collectively (decision-making autonomy).

IV. The 2030 Agenda Indicators and women's autonomy

29. The 2030 Agenda opens up an important window of opportunity for strengthening women's empowerment and autonomy, which is understood in the sense that, "Empowerment amplifies

women's voices and is expressed in their ability to engage politically, while autonomy is the result of societal changes to expand women's spaces of freedom and reduce inequality gaps" (ECLAC, 2015a, p. 23). ECLAC has placed a strategic focus on women's autonomy in three dimensions and on the interrelations between them: (i) economic autonomy, which concerns the possibility of controlling assets and resources; (ii) physical autonomy, which refers to the capacity to freely decide on issues of sexuality, reproduction, and the right to live a life free of violence; and (iii) decision-making autonomy, which means full participation in the decisions that affect the lives of women, their families, their communities and society at large (ECLAC, 2016a). The autonomies interact with each other, forming a complex gear that cannot be interpreted and tackle in isolation. They need to be seen in their relations, interdependencies and with an integrating approach. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, along with its Goals and their targets, forms a programmatic framework that contributes to women's autonomy in its multiple dimensions, while supporting the creation of structural conditions for equality.

30. The Division for Gender Affairs of ECLAC, through the Regional Gender Agenda, seeks to contribute to the adaptation of the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to the specific needs and gender gaps in each country in order to reach the gender equality in Latin America and the Caribbean. In this sense, this section analysis the SDGs of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development from a gender perspective, emphasizing the existing synergies between them and presenting information on the progress and pending challenges of the region on crucial issues for the achievement of women's autonomy.

A. Economic Autonomy and the 2030 Agenda

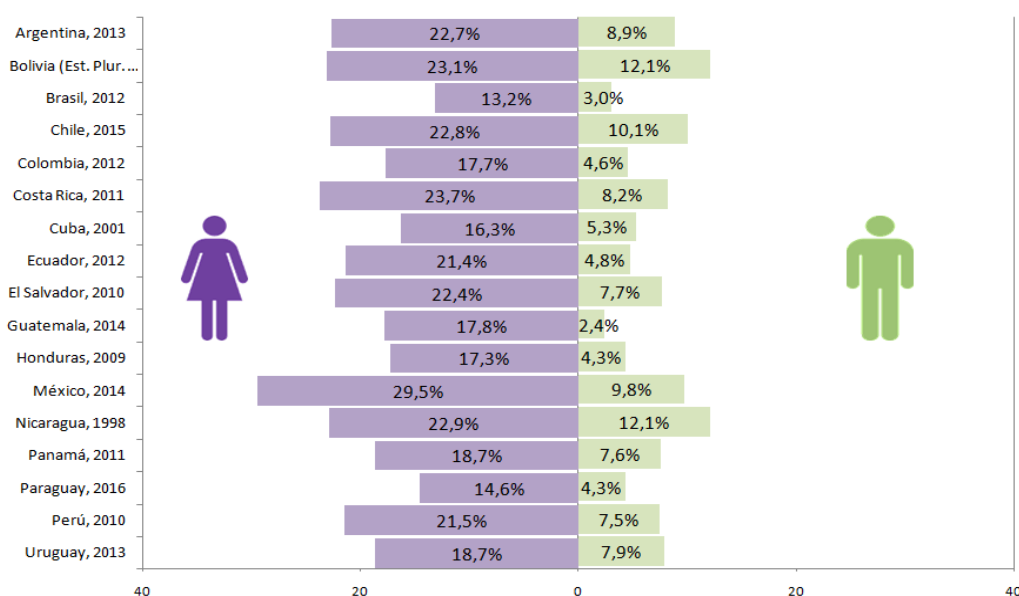
31. Economic autonomy is defined as the capacity of women to generate their own income and resources by participating in paid work in equal conditions to men. The concept considers women's time use and their contribution to the economies. The 2030 Agenda includes a list of SDGs and targets that aim at achieving women's economic autonomy.
32. SDG 1 seeks to end poverty in all its forms, while SDG 8 aims at promoting sustainable, inclusive and sustained economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all. Meanwhile, SDG 9 (Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation), includes the 9.1 target which emphasizes the support of economic development and human well-being, with a focus on affordable and equitable access for all. Furthermore, target 10.3 seeks to ensure equal opportunities and to reduce inequalities of outcome, including the elimination discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard.
33. Over the past decade in Latin America and the Caribbean, women did not benefit from poverty reduction and GDP growth as much as men. On the contrary, there is a growing trend for women to be overrepresented in poor households (ECLAC 2016a). In Latin America, the femininity index increased 11 points between 2002 and 2014, going from 107.1 to 118.2. This means that, in 2014, the percentage of women in poor households was 18% higher than that of men in the same age group, showing the overrepresentation of women in the poorest households (ECLAC, 2017b). Additionally, the number of women without own income largely exceeds the number of men in the same situation. In 2014, one out of three women older than 15 years did not possess any own income, while in the case of men only 1 in 10 was in this situation (ECLAC, 2016a).
34. Ending poverty implies the full, productive and decent access to the labour market. However, the principal barrier to incorporate women in to the labour market is the unpaid domestic and care work overload generating a vicious circle between poverty and time dedicated to unpaid work. As the indicator 5.4.1 (proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex, age and location) shows in figure IV.1, women in the region spend much more time per day and per week than men on

unpaid work. Although time-use surveys are still not comparable owing to methodological differences, even the lowest percentage of time that women spend on unpaid work (13.2% in Brazil) is still higher than the highest percentage of time that men spend on this activity (12.1% in the Plurinational State of Bolivia and Nicaragua). Women dedicate between one fifth and one third of their time each day or each week on unpaid domestic and care work, compared with about 10% for men.

Figure IV.1

Latin America (17 countries): time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex
(Sustainable Development Goal indicator 5.4.1)

(Percentages)



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of special tabulations from time-use surveys conducted in the respective countries.

Note: Figures take into account time spent on domestic and care work in one's own household, in other households, in the community and volunteer work, except in the case of Brazil, where the survey only asks one question relating to domestic work in one's own household, and of Honduras, which only includes information on care of members of one's own household. The data correspond to the national total except for Costa Rica (Greater Metropolitan Area) and Cuba (Old Havana). The population examined was 15 years and older, except in Argentina (18 years and older) and Nicaragua (6 years and older).

35. The differences are significant considering that while in women households of the first quintile spend an average of 46 hours per week on unpaid work, those in the fourth quintile spend almost 32 hours. Meanwhile, the differences in the amount of time spent on unpaid work between men households in the first and fifth quintile are not significant; they are generally less than one hour per day (ECLAC, 2017C). The sexual division of labour explains mainly women's economic participation in the lowest quintile, posing a difficult obstacle to overcome poverty.
36. The overload of unpaid work limits the participation of women in decision-making, the advance of their careers, as well as their professional possibilities, sometimes reducing their incomes and prospects of access social protection. For this reason, designing and implementing public policies for the redistribution of unpaid work is essential for gender equality and sustainable development (ECLAC, 2016a).
37. Gender wage gap is another persistent an obstacle for women's economic autonomy. Working women between age 20 and 49 years, who work 35 hours or more per week, receive 84% of the wage men,

with the same employment characteristics received. This means that women have a salary gap of 26 percentage points compared to their male peers (ECLAC, 2016e). According to Bidegain (2017), gender wage gaps are explained by two main reasons: (i) unfair and unequal social organization of care; and (ii) the heterogeneity of the productive structures of the region. Therefore, the author argues that bringing together the decent work and employment (target 8.5) with recognizing care and unpaid work (target 5.4) is crucial to avoid reproducing gender gaps. "Earning the same as men under equal conditions is a woman's right, and a requisite for her autonomy as well as for the achievement of gender equality." (ECLAC, 2016e).

38. Achieving formal employment and decent work for women, equal pay for work and protecting women's labour rights are keys for reaching the sustainable development with gender equality. For the countries of the region, the challenge to design policies to fight poverty with a gender perspective remains. To be objective in overcoming poverty, it is important that those policies promote women's integration into the labour markets, provide services and equal rights to economic resources (target 5.a) to endure women's full development.

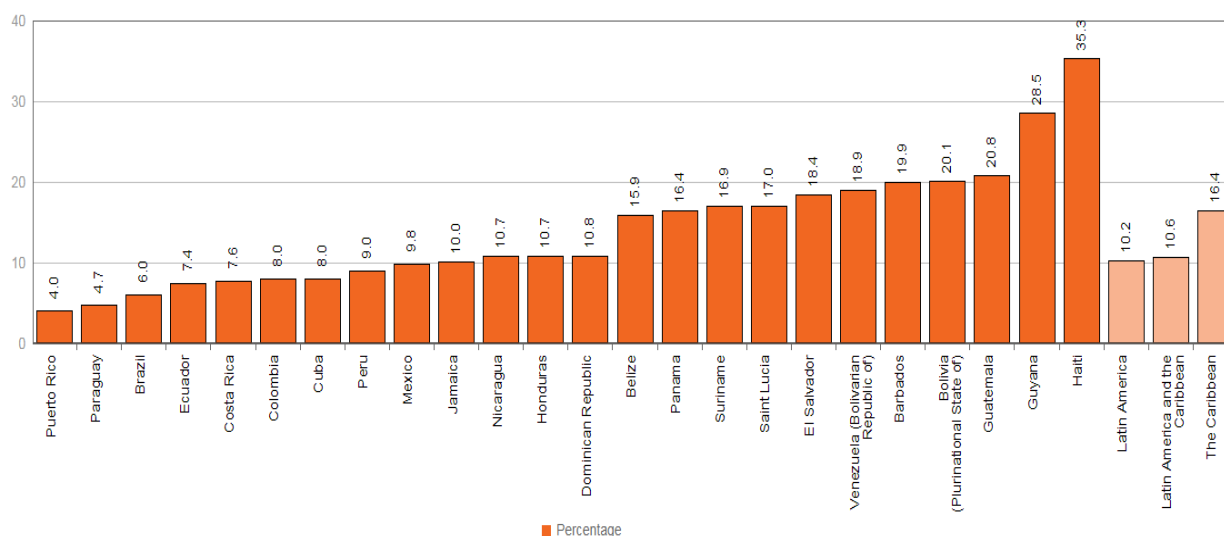
B. Physical Autonomy and the 2030 Agenda

39. Women's physical autonomy is expressed in two dimensions that show the relevant social problems at the region: (i) the respect for women's sexual and reproductive rights of women and (ii) gender based violence.
40. Target 5.6 of SDG 5 aims at ensuring the universal access to sexual and reproductive health services and reproductive rights. Likewise, SDG 3, aims at ensuring healthy lives and promotes well-being for all at all ages, and includes target 3.7 which ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including for family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes; target 3.1 which establishes reducing the global maternal mortality ratio; and target 3.3 that aims at ending the epidemics of AIDS. All of these targets are aimed at achieving women's physical autonomy.
41. The timely and informed access to free, good-quality contraception, respecting the principle of confidentiality continues to be a challenge in the region. In accordance to indicator 3.7.1 (proportion of women of reproductive age (aged 15-49 years) who have their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods), figure IV.2 shows that in 2013, in Latin America and the Caribbean, an average of 10.6% of women between the age of 15 and 49 had unmet family planning needs. It is important to highlight that in the Caribbean the average is higher and reaches 16.4%.

Figure IV. 2

Latin America and the Caribbean (24 countries): Unmet need for family planning, latest available data

(Percentages)



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) *Unmet demand for family planning*, Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean, 2017

42. Teenage pregnancy is also a problem that persists in the region: in general, the adolescent maternity rate in Latin American and Caribbean is above 12%. Those indicators show that public policies should prioritize the prevention of adolescent pregnancy, taking a multidimensional approach. To reach targets 5.6 and 3.7, some of the most basic step for public action in the region is timely and informed access to free, good-quality contraception, respecting the principle of confidentiality, necessarily accompanied by comprehensive sexual education and discourage of early unions (ECLAC, 2016a).
43. The high rates of maternal mortality in the region are due largely to difficulties in obtaining access to proper sexual health and reproductive health services or due to unsafe abortions (Montevideo Consensus, ECLAC, 2013b). So, for achieving target 3.1 it is fundamental to States considering amending their laws and regulations relating to abortion in order to protect the lives and health of women and adolescent girls. Voluntary termination of pregnancy should be considered a reproductive right for all women and girls.
44. Furthermore, targets 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 of SDG 5 seek to eliminate all forms of discrimination, violence and harmful practices against women and girls in the public and private spheres. Also, SDGs 11 and 16 support the fight against gender based violence, some of its targets are related to the eradication of gender violence. The SDG 11 seeks to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable, while SDG 16 seeks to promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development. Target 16.1 focuses on significantly reducing all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere. Target 16.2 seeks to end abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children. Finally, target 16.3 aims at promoting the rule of law at the national and international level to ensure equal access to justice for all.
45. Violence against women is a public health problem, a violation of human rights and a barrier to development, expressed most dramatically as femicide or feminicide. Although new regulatory frameworks have been adopted in the region to prevent, punish and eradicate gender violence,

violence did not decline. 16 countries has created legislation on femicide or feminicide in 2016, nevertheless, a total of 1,857 women were victims this crime in the region (13 in Latin America and 3 in the Caribbean) (ECLAC, 2017f).

46. Violence against women, and especially femicide or feminicide, is a major challenge of the Regional Gender Agenda, and must be gender mainstreamed into efforts on reaching the Sustainable Development. For that, it necessary to expand and improve the sources of information, and also generate registers to identify the different characteristics and manifestations of violence. In the case of feminicide, it is crucial to advance in its categorization. The promotion of penal reforms needs to be accompanied by better tools for collecting data and punishing this crime.
47. Comprehensive and crosscutting public policies and create institutions capable of effective enforcement are needed to subvert power relations embedded on discrimination, violence and inequality, so the goal of ending all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls can be achieved. Achieving gender equality implies the protection of women's integrity, for which it is necessary to legislate against any form of gender violence. Likewise, equal access to justice for women and men must be guaranteed.

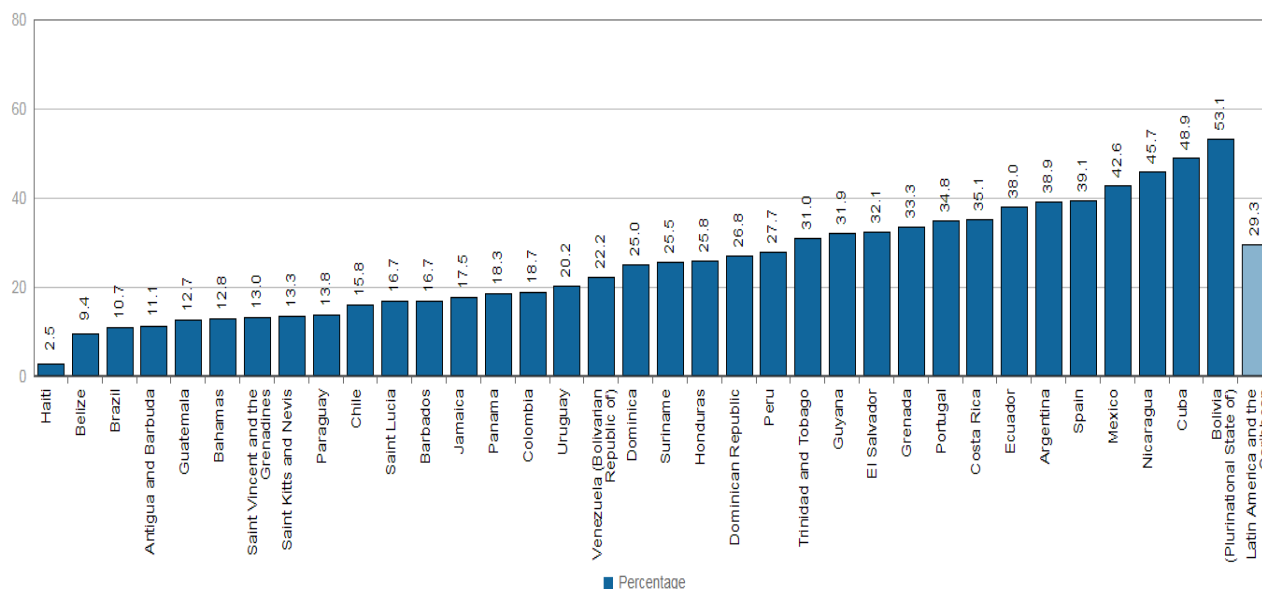
C. Autonomy in decision making and the 2030 Agenda

48. Autonomy in decision making refers to women at different levels of public and private spheres and the measures aimed at promoting their full participation in equal conditions. The 2030 Agenda recognizes that "women and girls must enjoy equal access to quality education, economic resources and political participation as well as equal opportunities with men and boys for employment, leadership and decision-making at all levels" (United Nations, 2015, para. 20). By that, the Agenda shows that concretely contributes to women's decision-making autonomy.
49. Particularly, target 5.5 of SDG 5 aims at ensuring women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decisionmaking in political, economic and public life. Also, SDG 10 (reduce inequality within and among countries), includes among its targets: "ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard" (target 10.3).
50. Despite the fact that the participation of women in positions of government decision-making has improved considerably in recent years in the region due to reforms on the electoral systems, women presence still does not exceed 30% at any level in the executive, legislative and judicial systems, being far from a parity democracy. In accordance to what indicator 5.5.1 proposes (proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments and local governments), figure IV.3 shows the average of women in the national legislative body is 29.3%, which is above the world global average of 0.5%. Nonetheless, there are significant differences between countries, being the Plurinational State of Bolivia the most equal legislative body with a rate of 53.1%, and the most unequal Haiti (2.5%).

Figure IV.3

Latin America, the Caribbean and the Iberian Peninsula (36 countries): Number of women legislators, 2015

(Percentages)



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), *Legislative power: percentage of women in the national legislative body*, Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean, 2017

51. When compared with the achieved progress at the national elections, the participation of women in local power has progressed even slower. In most of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, the percentage of women mayors is below 15% and the average only reached 13.4% in 2016 (ECLAC, 2017g). Also, the rate of elected city council members who are female is 28.8%. (ECLAC, 2017h)
52. Female participation in senior management positions in the private sector remains very low and is another matter of concern in Latin America and the Caribbean. Scuro and Bercovich (2014) analyzed the situation of women in a group of 72 large companies in the region, and found that only 4.2% of them had a woman as CEO or president in 2014. The participation level of women in the directories of large companies is also low and reached only 8% of the members of directories at the regional level, while the female presence in the committees or executive boards reaches 9.5%.
53. Regarding the elimination of discriminatory practices (target 5.1), 17 countries in the region have signed and ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 3 countries signed it but did not yet ratify it and 18 countries (mostly from the Caribbean) did not yet sig the Protocol (ECLAC, 2017h). The Protocol was adopted by the General Assembly in 1999, and obliges the signatory States to recognize the competence of the Committee for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) to receive and consider complaints expressed by organized civil society groups or individuals, which constitutes a demanding mechanism of accountability in matters of acts of discrimination against women.
54. Democratizing political, socioeconomic and cultural regimes and transforming gender relations by dismantling the androcentric understanding of the human being and exercise of power are

fundamental keys. Moving towards parity democracies is another pillar for achieving equality by 2030 (Bidegain, 2017).

D. Interrelation of the autonomies

55. Gender equality requires further efforts to ensure the autonomy of women, understood as the three dimensions previously analysed (economic, physical and decision making autonomy). These three dimensions are interrelated and need to be seen in their relations, interdependencies and with an integrating approach.
56. Some of the SDGs permeate the three dimensions of women's autonomy, such as, SDG 4, which seeks to ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning. Undoubtedly, achieving the autonomy of women (in its three dimensions) implies having equal access to quality education. Meanwhile, target 9.5 of SDG 9 aims at enhancing scientific research, upgrade the technological capabilities of industrial sectors in all countries, in particular developing countries, encouraging innovation and substantially increasing the number of research and development workers per 1 million people and public as well as private research and development spending.
57. In Latin America and the Caribbean, important progress was made in education: according to figures from ECLAC (2016a), in 2014 there were more women than men enrolled in tertiary education (50.4% vs. 39%). However, there is a marked segmentation of careers chosen by men and women, with a low presence of women in areas of science and technology. On the other hand, the deficit in pre-primary education persists as a challenge in the region. The design of strategies to increase pre-primary insertion is essential not only for the proper early childhood development, but also to help reducing women's workload of care responsibilities (Bidegain, 2017).
58. Another obstacle that limits the autonomy of women is the so-called gender digital gap. The gender digital gap is a tangible reality, which intersects with other factors of exclusion, such as economic capacity, the availability of time, knowledge, skills and experience and cultural and linguistic baggage. According to figures from ECLAC (2013a), although women have the same access to computers and Internet connection as men in the household, there is a digital gap in terms of Internet use in all the countries of the region, with a lower percentage of women who claim to use the Internet than men from any access point (home, work, educational establishments, community centers, etc.).
59. Closing the digital gender gap is key for women “to reap the benefits that these tools provide in terms of increases in labour productivity, more efficient use of time and the job search, lower cost of access to information in areas such as health and education” (ECLAC, 2013a, page 2). Therefore, the 2030 Agenda includes targets ambitioned to closing the digital gap by promoting access to Internet and other information technologies for the entire population.
60. Target 5.b seeks to enhance the use of enabling technologies, in particular information and communications technologies, to promote the empowerment of women. However, the indicator linked to this goal is the proportion of people who own a mobile phone, disaggregated by sex. This indicator is insufficient to measure women's access to information and communications technology, because as mentioned earlier, the digital gender gap is not related to access to technological means, but rather to the use of these technologies and the time spent using them.
61. Target 9.c of SDG 9 aims at increasing significantly the access to information and communications technologies and strives to provide universal and affordable access to Internet in least developed countries by 2020. Finally, target 17.8 of SDG 17 also seeks enhance the use of enabling technologies, in particular information and communications technologies.

V. Conclusions

62. The 2030 Agenda promotes a global framework that includes gender equality, women's rights and the empowerment of women as a constitutive pillar of sustainable development. Therefore, this framework constitutes an opportunity to carry out deep changes to achieve gender equality and women's rights and empowerment. The 2030 Agenda set up the goals, and also the means to achieve them and establishes the commitments to be implemented at the local, subnational, national, regional and international levels. In this line, the Regional Gender Agenda establish public policy commitments to move towards a structural change for equality and sustainability. Therefore, the full and effective implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda through its Montevideo Strategy provides the roadmap for the achievement of the SDGs considering the priorities and challenges of the region.
63. Although the implementation of the 2030 Agenda presents a series of challenges, it also represents an opportunity to generate positive synergies and make sure that the success of one goal does not prohibit the success of other goals, especially the targets and goals related to gender equality and the rights of women and girls. In addition, the regional architecture allows the monitoring of the 2030 Agenda with a comprehensive and systemic approach instead of being a summary of national reports focused on the implementation of the SDGs in a sectoral approach at the national level. Therefore, monitoring, evaluation and the accountability must consider the interrelation between targets, the scales in which they are implemented, the conditions that allow overcoming political, economic and institutional obstacles at the regional and international levels to advance towards equality, sustainability and the guarantee of the human rights of women in Latin America and the Caribbean.

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