

Original article

The 2030 Agenda: a review of gender equity in Latin America and the Caribbean

La Agenda 2030: un balance de la equidad de género en Latinoamérica y el Caribe

A Agenda 2030: um balanço da igualdade de género na América Latina e nas Caraíbas



Anabel Garrido Ortolá¹  0000-0002-5379-2852  angarrid@ucm.es

¹ Complutense University of Madrid. España.

Received: 9/11/2022

Accepted: 18/12/2022

ABSTRACT

In September 2015, the Sustainable Development Goals were approved, giving way to the previous agenda: The Millennium Development Goals. At the halfway point of the date for their achievement in 2030, it is necessary to reflect on the setbacks and advances of the Agenda. Specifically, the objective of this article is to analyze the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in the achievement of gender equity in the Latin American and Caribbean region. Specifically, it will address the situation of women's economic autonomy, addressing Goals 1, 5 and 8. The methodology used is through qualitative review, applying theoretical methods of a socio-legal nature and through the analysis-synthesis of the data obtained. To this end, this will be studied through two axes, on the one hand, the data collected from the region around the selected goals and indicators; and, on the other, the development of innovative legal norms. In this sense, although there have been some advances that allow the 2030 Agenda on a path of progress, the pandemic crisis has revealed the structural conditions of gender inequality, making it necessary to reflect on the crisis of care in the region. The pandemic crisis has shown several setbacks, but a positive trend can be indicated in the approval of comprehensive regulatory frameworks in the region, which shows the interest in making feminized and unpaid work visible, but these must be accompanied by a real political commitment.

Keywords: development; gender; inequality; sustainable development goals; SDG.

RESUMEN

En septiembre de 2015 se aprobaron los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible, que dan paso a la anterior agenda: los Objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio. En el Ecuador de la fecha para su consecución en 2030, es necesario reflexionar sobre los retrocesos y avances de la Agenda. En concreto, el objetivo del presente artículo es analizar la implementación de los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible en la consecución de la equidad de género en la región de América Latina y el Caribe. De manera específica, se atenderá la situación de la autonomía económica de las mujeres, abordando los objetivos 1, 5 y 8. La metodología utilizada se realiza mediante la revisión cualitativa, aplicando métodos teóricos de carácter socio-jurídico y mediante el análisis-síntesis de los datos obtenidos. Para ello, esto se estudiará a través de dos ejes, por un lado, los datos recogidos de la región en torno a las metas e indicadores seleccionados; y, por otro, la elaboración de normas jurídicas innovadoras. En este sentido, si bien ha habido algunos avances que permiten la Agenda 2030 en un camino de progreso, la crisis pandémica ha develado las condiciones estructurales de la desigualdad de género, haciendo necesaria una reflexión sobre la crisis de los cuidados en la región. La crisis pandémica ha mostrado diversos retrocesos, pero se puede indicar una tendencia positiva en la aprobación de marcos normativos integrales en la región, que muestra el interés por visibilizar el trabajo feminizado y no remunerado, pero estas deben acompañarse con un verdadero compromiso político.

Palabras clave: desarrollo; género; desigualdad; objetivos de desarrollo sostenible; ODS.

RESUMO

Em setembro de 2015, foram aprovados os Objetivos de Desenvolvimento Sustentável, dando lugar à agenda anterior: os Objetivos de Desenvolvimento do Milênio. A meio caminho da data da sua realização em 2030, é necessário refletir sobre os retrocessos e avanços da Agenda. Especificamente, o objetivo deste artigo é analisar a implementação dos Objetivos de Desenvolvimento Sustentável na realização da igualdade de género na região da América Latina e Caraíbas. Especificamente, centrar-se-á na situação da autonomia económica das mulheres, abordando os objetivos 1, 5 e 8. A

metodologia utilizada é uma revisão qualitativa, aplicando métodos teóricos de natureza sócio jurídica e através da análise-síntese dos dados obtidos. Para o efeito, isto será estudado através de dois eixos, por um lado, os dados recolhidos na região em torno dos objetivos e indicadores selecionados; e, por outro lado, o desenvolvimento de normas jurídicas inovadoras. Neste sentido, embora tenha havido alguns avanços que colocaram a Agenda 2030 num caminho de progresso, a crise pandémica revelou as condições estruturais da desigualdade de género, tornando necessária uma reflexão sobre a crise dos cuidados na região. A crise pandémica mostrou vários reveses, mas uma tendência positiva pode ser indicada na aprovação de quadros normativos abrangentes na região, o que demonstra o interesse em tornar visível o trabalho feminizado e não remunerado, mas estes devem ser acompanhados por um verdadeiro compromisso político.

Palavras-chave: desenvolvimento; género; desigualdade; objetivos de desenvolvimento sustentável; ODS.

INTRODUCTION

In 2000, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were approved, becoming the first international development agenda that agreed on a commitment to achieve 8 goals in 15 years (2000-2015). Although these goals were not achieved and proved to be an ambitious agenda, it did favor the generation of synergies and alliances between countries, proving to be a tool for joining forces in the same direction.

On this path, the Sustainable Development Goals (2015-2030) emerged, setting an even more complex horizon, the achievement of seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which challenge not only the countries of the South, but also the countries of the North. The breadth of the SDGs makes it possible to include objectives ranging from poverty eradication, sustainable development of the planet, peace building and the fight against gender inequality, which will be the focus of this paper.

Thus, the unequal distribution of material and symbolic gender resources is a consequence of a structure that is based on a sexual division of labor - productive and (re)productive (Federici, 2013; Pérez Orozco, 2019) - that establishes a differentiated and hierarchical position where men are positioned in privilege (Fraser, 1997; Sassen, 2003). In this sense, the development model

(re)produces these inequalities, making it necessary to collect strategies and transformation tools that promote a comprehensive change.

In the context of an economic crisis conditioned by a pandemic and women's work overload, it is worth reflecting on the obstacles and the incorporation of gender equity in the Latin American and Caribbean region. Thus, the COVID-19 crisis has shown how gender gaps are not only maintained, but widened, revealing the structural inequality between men and women. In this line, the Latin American and Caribbean region has had a greater impact of inequality, thus generating a domino effect where women have been the most affected. This context demonstrates the need to address the lines of work of the 2030 Agenda, evaluate the setbacks and advances derived from it, as well as to propose strategies that allow progress towards gender equity.

Although this issue has been addressed a lot from feminist theory and action, the need to show the invisible and place the private in the public space, it is still necessary to reflect and analyze care work (Federici, 2013; Pérez Orozco, 2019; Sassen, 2003). This continues to be a feminized, undervalued and difficult to quantify work, which maintains the sexual division of labor as a barrier to the achievement of real gender equity.

On the other hand, at the midpoint of the 2030 Agenda, it seems pertinent to make a diagnosis of the current situation, showing how the pandemic context has revealed the structure of inequality based on one of the two genders. But also, showing the socio-legal advances in the region, such as the approval of comprehensive care systems.

For all these reasons, the aim of this article is to analyze the implementation of the SDGs in the achievement of gender equity in the Latin American and Caribbean region. Specifically, that which alludes to the unequal distribution of care, as a key axis in the devaluation of work and the lack of economic redistribution. To this end, progress and setbacks in relation to SDGs 1, 5 and 8 will be addressed, including indicators that allude to economic autonomy.

In summary, this study allows to reflect on the scope of economic equity between men and women in the region, revealing those issues that are invisible, but which sustain life. This will allow us to move towards transformative socio-political strategies that allow us to break with the gender hierarchies that underlie economic violence in the region.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The bibliographic review was carried out through various works published by international institutions, such as: the World Bank, the United Nations, the International Labor Organization (ILO) or the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), as well as regional ones, such as those prepared by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

The selection of the different reports was made seeking, in the first place, the timeliness of data that would account for the international context on economic inequality (World Bank, 2022; EIGE, 2021; United Nations, 2015, 2020, 2021; ILO, 2021) and regional (ECLAC, 2021a, 2021b, 2022). And, secondly, studies that address care in the region (Bango & Piñeiro, 2022; ECLAC, 2017, 2021c; UN Women & ECLAC, 2022).

For this study, a qualitative methodology was used in order to provide an account of the situation of the region in terms of progress in the 2030 agenda. The selection of the Latin American region is made as a regional comparative element, which due to its diversity allows to observe the differences between countries, but at the same time their similarities; elements that allow to show possible solutions and improvements.

Based on the data submitted by institutional organizations such as ECLAC, the United Nations, UN Women and the ILO, a qualitative assessment has been made of the progress and challenges in the region. To this end, it has been used socio-legal theoretical methods, which show how the indicators and goals have been implemented in the region through legal texts and the implementation of comprehensive transformative measures. Specifically, it has been addressed those legal texts that integrate national care systems and that are linked to the ratification by their countries of ILO Convention 189. On the other hand, an analysis-synthesis has been carried out to identify the social norms underlying the data, making it possible to assess the adequacy of the goals and indicators of the 2030 Agenda.

The study on the achievement of the 2030 Agenda was conducted from the approach of three Goals. SDG 1 seeks to "end poverty in all its forms everywhere", SDG 5 specifically addresses gender equality, and finally, SDG 8 addresses the employment and unemployment situation in the labor market, collecting the relevant indicators for the study from each of them (Table 1).

Table 1. Targets and indicators addressed under SDGs 1, 5 and 8

GOALS	INDICATORS
1.2 By 2030, reduce by at least half, according to national definitions, the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions.	1.2.1 Proportion of the population living below the national poverty line, broken down by sex and age.
	1.2.2 Proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty, in all its dimensions, according to national definitions.
1.3 Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and, by 2030, achieve comprehensive coverage of the poor and vulnerable.	1.3.1 Proportion of population covered by social protection floor systems or levels, disaggregated by sex, distinguishing among children, unemployed, elderly, disabled, pregnant women, newborns, victims of work-related accidents, poor and vulnerable.
1.b Create sound policy frameworks at the national, regional and international levels, based on gender-sensitive pro-poor development strategies, to support accelerated investment in poverty eradication measures.	1.b.1 Proportion of recurrent and capital public expenditures devoted to sectors that disproportionately benefit women, the poor, and vulnerable groups.
5.1. End all forms of discrimination against women and girls everywhere.	5.1.1 Determine whether or not legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce and monitor gender equality and non-discrimination.
5.4 Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through public services, infrastructure and social protection policies, and by promoting shared responsibility in the home and family, as appropriate in each country.	5.4.1 Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by gender, age, and location.
5.c Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable laws to promote gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.	5.c.1 Proportion of countries with systems in place to monitor gender equality and women's empowerment and to allocate public funds for this purpose.

8.3 Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, the creation of decent jobs, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services.	8.3.1 Proportion of informal employment in the non-agricultural sector, broken down by sex.
8.5 By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value.	8.5.1 Average hourly earnings of male and female employees by occupation, age, and disability.
8.8 Protect labor rights and promote a safe and secure working environment for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular migrant women and those in precarious employment.	8.5.2 Unemployment rate, broken down by gender, age and persons with disabilities.
	8.8.1 Frequency rates of fatal and non-fatal occupational injuries, broken down by sex and migratory status.
	8.8.2 Level of national compliance with labor rights (freedom of association and collective bargaining) according to International Labor Organization (ILO) textual sources and domestic legislation, disaggregated by sex and migration status.

Source: Own elaboration based on United Nations (2015)

On the other hand, the content analysis method was carried out through the systematization of data, reports and bibliographic materials. This review of material has made it possible to classify and collect the fundamentals on the achievement of SDGs 1, 5 and 8 in the region, through data and institutional reports, as well as through the review of critical scientific articles, which will be the theoretical basis from a feminist and, therefore, transformative perspective¹. In this way, all the documents collected

¹ The gender perspective refers to the view that addresses the relationship between men and women, conditioned by a hierarchical and patriarchal social structure. Although it is essential to address gender in the various analyses, a feminist perspective is necessary to promote transformation and, therefore, real equality between genders.

form a theoretical framework that supports the critical analysis of the current context, allowing the projection of new transformative tools that enable gender equity in the region.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Equal access to employment is not a reality in all countries. According to World Bank studies, in 2022, women have an average score of 76.5 out of 100, enjoying one third of the rights that men have (World Bank, 2022). The most persistent gaps are in remuneration and parenting (hence care), showing how it is necessary to address the structural practices that condition the unequal redistribution of work (World Bank, 2022).

The global pandemic crisis of COVID-19 has revealed the weaknesses of the social, legal, political and economic systems of different societies. While widening gender inequality gaps, the pandemic has revealed deeper issues, such as the inequalities resulting from the maintenance of the sexual division of labor, which condition gender roles in productive and reproductive work.

Firstly, with respect to paid employment, the crisis has led to a greater loss of employment than during the Great Recession (2008-2009), reducing by 3% in men and 4.2% in women; specifically, in the region of the Americas the data show a greater impact, reducing the employment rate of women to 9.4%, compared to 7% in men (ILO, 2021). Secondly, domestic and care work has been one of the greatest demands, increasing and resulting in a greater workload for women and girls; this fact derives from the context of confinement that increases this work, as well as limiting external support (EIGE, 2021).

For these reasons, one of the great fears in the 2030 Agenda has been how this context could reverse the progress made in recent years (ECLAC, 2022; United Nations, 2020). While it is true that Latin America and the Caribbean are among the regions with the highest averages (along with Europe and Central Asia), it is also the region with the largest inequality gaps. For this reason, it is even more necessary, if possible, to take measures to advance towards a development that will reduce and close the inequality gaps in the region, where the gender perspective is a key axis for the achievement of an equitable democracy.

The situation of the region through the data

The post-pandemic context has shown that Latin America and the Caribbean is among the regions that have been most impacted by inequality (ECLAC, 2022). Studies in the region indicated that the sectors with the highest risk of job loss are those highly feminized, such as commerce, tourism, domestic work, among others; which in turn are characterized by low qualification and remuneration, as well as high rates of informality (ECLAC, 2022). Particularly in the case of women, their participation in the labor market has been reduced more than in other crisis contexts (ECLAC, 2021b, 2021c), thus evidencing a setback of about eighteen years in 2020 (ECLAC, 2022).

SDG 8, which seeks to "promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all" has a diversity of scope in terms of the selected targets. Thus, target 8 is found with good progress, targets 3 and 5 are advancing, but not sufficiently to achieve the targets set in 2030 and, therefore, required the implementation of public policies (ECLAC, 2022). The data show that women (11.8%) have suffered more unemployment than men (8.1%) (ECLAC, 2022). These percentages increase in households with fewer resources, where women also face more difficulties, with the unemployment rate for women being 27.7% and 22% for men (ECLAC, 2022).

These data reflect some of the issues already indicated in the Montevideo Strategy for the Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda in the Framework of Sustainable Development towards 2030 (ECLAC, 2017). It identified "four structural nodes of gender inequality (...) I) socioeconomic inequality and the persistence of poverty; II) discriminatory and violent patriarchal cultural patterns and the predominance of the culture of privilege; III) the sexual division of labor and the unfair social organization of care, and IV) the concentration of power and hierarchical relations in the public sphere" that needed to be overcome in order to achieve an equitable society by 2030 (ECLAC, 2017, p. 15).

Women's lack of economic autonomy, as well as socio-cultural issues derived from patriarchal dynamics, the maintenance of privilege and power around social hierarchies are evidence of socioeconomic injustice, but also of injustice of recognition, where the feminized is devalued and lacking recognition (Fraser, 1997). Although the different points are interrelated and feed on each other, the third point, which indicates "the sexual division of labor and the unjust social organization of care", is particularly relevant for this paper. In the current context, the data show an increase in

the inequality gap and setbacks in gender equity in the region, issues that not only jeopardize the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, but also its reversal.

These structural obstacles identify the maintenance of economic inequalities: the feminization of poverty and the feminization of survival (Sassen, 2003). Along these lines, SDG 1, which seeks to end poverty, shows that the available data "do not allow us to predict that the desired thresholds will be reached by 2030" (ECLAC, 2022, p. 46). According to ECLAC data, the average of the index on the feminization of poverty is 113.3² for the region, with a diversity that ranges from 102 in Honduras to 137.1 in Uruguay.

On the other hand, although SDG 5 shows a correct trend, it is not considered sufficient to achieve the target set for 2030 (UN Women & ECLAC, 2022). It should be noted that, unlike the MDGs, the 2030 Agenda has as target 5.4 "to recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through public services, infrastructure and social protection policies, and by promoting shared responsibility in the home and family, as appropriate in each country"; as well as indicator 5.4.1 which urges countries to collect statistical data on the dedication of unpaid work (United Nations, 2015).

One of the key issues is the collection of information on the "proportion of time dedicated to domestic and unpaid care work, disaggregated by sex, age and location" (SDG 5.4.1), since, without it, it is difficult to make a diagnosis. In the region, 23 countries³ have some measurement of time spent on care and domestic work (ECLAC, 2022).

From the data obtained, the unequal distribution of time by gender can be observed. While women dedicate between 12% and 24.7% of their time to domestic and care tasks, men dedicate between 2.3% and 12.5% (ECLAC, 2022). Thus, it can be seen that women's dedication to these tasks is three times that of men.

² The index measures gender disparity in poverty, with those above 100 showing a greater impact on women.

³ The countries with some measurement are (in chronological order of incorporation): Nicaragua (1998); Trinidad and Tobago (2000); Dominica and Peru (2010); Bolivia, Honduras, Panama and Venezuela (2011); Uruguay (2013); Chile (2015); Argentina, Cuba, Paraguay and Dominican Republic (2016); Costa Rica, Ecuador and El Salvador (2017); Jamaica (2018); Brazil, Guatemala and Mexico (2019); Colombia (2020-2021) and Grenada (2021).

Progress: the generation of new regulatory frameworks

The data are not only unflattering in terms of the achievement of the goals established in the region, but also show setbacks. In this line, it is relevant to take into account that it is women who assume the tasks of life maintenance, especially in the context of economic and health crisis, through a fictitious structure, product of the sociocultural construct, which places women as the caregivers (Federici, 2013; Pérez Orozco, 2019; Sassen, 2003). This invisible work maintains the economic system, passing on a work that is performed out of love (Federici, 2013).

Despite the importance of care in relation to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the region's economies, it remains invisible. Thus, the capitalist system is structured on a whole kind of unpaid, (re)productive work, which maintains its workers - feeding them, washing their clothes, caring for their offspring, among others - for productive work. It is the so-called "mushroom worker" who is shown as emerging only in the productive space, without thinking about the process that leads him to that place (Pérez Orozco, 2019, p. 168).

Consequently, the lack of economic autonomy and the obstacles that impede advances in equality are rooted in the unjust social organization of care, which is maintained through a kind of sexual division of labor that places women in a job that is not only unpaid but also devalued (Fraser, 1997). For this reason, various indicators have been pointed out that call for the creation of comprehensive regulatory frameworks that can provide legal coverage. It is worth noting the positive trend in the creation of legal norms by country, as well as the ratification by eighteen countries in the region of ILO Convention 189 (Table 2).

Table 2. Ratification of ILO Convention 189 by Latin American and Caribbean Countries

No.	Country	Date
1	Uruguay	June 14, 2012
2	Nicaragua	January 10, 2013
3	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	April 15, 2013
4	Paraguay	May 7, 2013
5	Guyana	August 9, 2013
6	Ecuador	December 18, 2013
7	Costa Rica	January 20, 2014
8	Argentina	March 24, 2014
9	Colombia	May 9, 2014
10	Dominican Republic	May 15, 2015
11	Chile	June 10, 2015
12	Panama	June 11, 2015
13	Jamaica	October 11, 2016
14	Brazil	January 31, 2018
15	Grenada	November 12, 2018
16	Peru	November 26, 2018
17	Mexico	July 3, 2020
18	Antigua and Barbuda	July 28, 2021

Source: Prepared by the authors based on information from ILO (2021)

Of the eighteen countries that have ratified it, eleven of them have initiated a process of approval, incorporation or reflection of Integrated Care Systems. These include Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay.

In the Argentine case, the process of designing a Federal Care System began in 2020, through an Interministerial Roundtable on Care Policies coordinated by the Ministry of Women, Gender and Diversity (UN Women & ECLAC, 2022). To this end, several actions were carried out to analyze the

situation in the country: the Federal Care Map; the Report on the reasons to invest in care; and the platform to measure care times "Care Calculator". In March 2022, the draft Law for the creation of a comprehensive care system with a gender perspective was announced, and two months later the project "Cuidar en Igualdad" (Caring in Equality) was presented, which addresses care as a right (Bango & Piñeiro, 2022).

Since 2016 Brazil has had the *Criança Feliz* program, aimed at supporting pregnant women. This program has a womanizing character, as it reinforces the role of caregivers of women in their condition as mothers and keeps the responsibility of care in them. However, one of the relevant milestones in the country is the interministerial ordinance 3/202128 that creates a working group under the mandate to design a proposal for a national care policy (Bango & Piñeiro, 2022).

In Chile, the Social Protection System has been implemented, consisting of three pillars: Chile crece contigo, Chile cuida, and Chile oportunidades y seguridades (UN Women & ECLAC, 2022). The creation of a national care system is currently being promoted (Bango & Piñeiro, 2022).

Colombia has Law 1413 of 2010, which establishes the inclusion of the care economy in the system of national accounts. This regulatory framework has made it possible to make unpaid work visible, as well as to conduct surveys on care that provide an approximation of the situation (Bango & Piñeiro, 2022).

Similarly, since 2020 Colombia has had the municipal experience of the District Care System of Bogota, which has implemented various services and programs around care in the district (Bango & Piñeiro, 2022; UN Women & ECLAC, 2022). In parallel to this, Decree 1228 of 2022 was issued, which created the Intersectoral Commission for the Care Economy that works on the development of a National Care System.

Costa Rica is one of the countries at the forefront on the issue of care. Since 2010 it has had a system of early childhood care, through the National Network of Child Care and Development, sanctioned by the Law of 2014 and in 2015 the accounting of domestic work to the country was approved. In addition, together with the Joint Institute of Social Assistance, the National Care Policy 2021-2031 was sanctioned, which implements a system of care towards dependents (UN Women & ECLAC, 2022). Although it is still early for an evaluation of its implementation, since it will be carried out gradually, an investment (with previous budgets already designated) of close to 0.4% of GDP is foreseen (Bango & Piñeiro, 2022).

Mexico has a National Program for Equality between Women and Men 2020-2024 that seeks to advance towards gender equity and non-discrimination. The Constitution incorporates the right to care and with the impetus of the Women's Institute (Inmujeres), the creation of a National Care System is beginning to be developed. In 2021, together with Inmujeres and UN Women, the initiative of the Global Alliance for Care emerged (Bango & Piñeiro, 2022).

In Panama, the Public Policy Roundtable was formed in 2019, with the mission of designing a Comprehensive Care System. In May 2020, various measures were presented in order to activate the economy from a gender approach, through the following objectives: 1) Create the National Care Table for the development of the Comprehensive Care System; 2) Guarantee labor rights in the field of care; 3) Promote co-responsibility between genders (UN Women & ECLAC, 2022).

Since 2016, Paraguay has had the Inter-Institutional Group for the Promotion of Care Policy, within the framework of the Social Cabinet and the Ministry of Women: recognizing it by decree the function of elaborating the National Care Policy in Paraguay (UN Women & ECLAC, 2022).

In Peru, through the Ministry of Women and Vulnerable Populations, a technical document was prepared in 2021 to provide a conceptual framework for care in the country, in order to develop a National Care System (Bango & Piñeiro, 2022).

In 2018, in the Dominican Republic, with the Public Policy Coordination Cabinet, a consultative meeting was promoted to incorporate care into the political agenda. In 2021 and with the next government, the Communities of Care pilot initiative was approved as regional experiences, and the Supérate program, with the horizon in the construction of a universal system in the country (Bango & Piñeiro, 2022; UN Women & ECLAC, 2022).

Finally, Uruguay is the first country in the region to implement the National Integrated Care System (SNIC), through Law 19.353 of 2015. This system has the co-responsibility of the State, market, communities and families for the provision of care (UN Women & ECLAC, 2022). In addition, the SNIC has resources approved in the National Budget Law (Bango & Piñeiro, 2022).

It is therefore a great step forward in the region to have these initiatives and processes for incorporating a comprehensive system that accounts for care. However, it should be noted that only ten countries have embarked on this path. In addition, most of the countries - with the exception of

Peru and Uruguay, which have an approved budget item linked to the SNIC - are in the process of initiating processes, so they will advance unevenly and will be conditioned by governmental changes.

However, it should be noted that it has been included those experiences that are opening up broad and comprehensive processes, but this does not mean that there are no other strategies in the region that address particular issues or establish care networks. These practices refer to specific policies or programs, such as the day care centers in El Salvador or, in the case of Cuba, the Ministry of Education's children's circles and casitas, as well as programs for care work from the family perspective in dialogue with public policies (Campoalegre Septien et al., 2021). On the other hand, the approval of laws on specific issues such as the protection of caregivers in Bolivia, the recognition of household chores in Ecuador, or co-responsibility in maternity/paternity in Honduras. Finally, the generation of spaces for the articulation of policies -spaces to promote transformation- such as the National Coalition for the Economic Empowerment of Women in Guatemala (Bango & Piñeiro, 2022).

The need to put life at the center

The attention to the care crisis evidenced by the pandemic has made it necessary to address the care economy as a central issue in policy agendas and initiatives. Thus, there is a need for "unpaid care work to be valued in economic models, but also for investment in quality paid care as part of essential public services and social protection mechanisms, including by improving pay and working conditions (target 5.4 of the Sustainable Development Goals)" (United Nations, 2021, p. 34).

Thus, although the data show a scenario that is not very conducive to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, the regulatory momentum in the region through, on the one hand, the ratification and incorporation of ILO Convention 189 and, on the other hand, the incorporation of Comprehensive Care Systems, evidences the need to address the sexual division of labor from the perspective of co-responsibility. This means that it is necessary to count on the participation of men, families and communities, as well as the market and mainly the State as guarantor of rights (Bango & Piñeiro, 2022).

Thus, it is through comprehensive, state-sponsored processes that it can be seen a social commitment to achieving true socioeconomic social justice that addresses the redistribution and recognition of feminized work. The proliferation of regulatory frameworks that address care from a comprehensive and universal perspective is essential to generate a new social pact that takes into account the sustainability of life and, therefore, of (re)productive work.

However, although the incorporation of ILO Convention 189 and the generation of comprehensive regulatory frameworks are important milestones, it should be noted that implementation and budgetary commitment (as shown in indicators 5.c.1 and 1.b.1) are fundamental for the achievement of transformative policies. Thus, from the experiences gathered in the discussion, it can be noted that only eleven countries in the region have incorporated, or are in the process of reflecting on their incorporation, comprehensive care systems, most of which are at an early stage of design, with the exception of Uruguay, which has a longer track record. In this case, the information gathered in Peru are the two experiences that include the linking of budgetary items.

Currently, the crisis of care is showing how the classic conflict of capital-labor exposed by Marx passes to the conflict of capital-life (Pérez Orozco, 2019). This situation could be seen with the pandemic, how a viral threat has conditioned a context of care, which has come into conflict with capital. To end this conflict, it is necessary to recognize the invisible, unpaid and private work of care, through the monetization of this, the accounting of domestic and care work in the GDP of the states, and the responsibility of these to assume (re)productive work as a public responsibility. For this reason, the commitment of countries must be linked to the generation of a broad strategy that offers comprehensive systems of protection, through legal sanction and the creation of public policies that bring about a change in the economic autonomy of women, putting an end to the feminization of poverty and survival.

Consequently, issues derived from the private sphere, such as care, must shift the focus to the public sphere, with the State fulfilling its role as guarantor of human rights. This has been seen in the pandemic crisis, which has highlighted the crisis of care and the unequal impact of gender in Latin America and the Caribbean. In this line, the approval of comprehensive regulatory frameworks offers two issues, on the one hand, a legal coverage to care work, establishing an economic redistribution by equalizing professions; and, on the other hand, a visibility of (re)productive work, showing its weight in the GDP establishes and establishing a recognition and valorization on it.

For these reasons, a social pact for gender equity requires the incorporation of the work done by women in GDP accounting, making it possible to place value on the sustainability of life. It is through the identification of the weight in the economic activity of a country where it will be possible to generate indicators that allow the implementation of appropriate public policies. In turn, from a human rights perspective, the State is the ultimate guarantor of the achievement of social equity, so it is the State that must be called upon to achieve socioeconomic justice between men and women.

This pact must be supported by governments, but it must also be articulated by a coordination with two logics: 1) multi-level, at various territorial scales; and, 2) multi-actor, through actors specialized in feminist issues (either experts, women's and feminist organizations of civil society, as well as other private organizations such as care cooperatives). In the latter case, and regardless of the limitations that may underlie the creation of care cooperatives, "there are many expectations placed on cooperatives to address crisis situations and to achieve economic inclusion and empowerment of women" (Alemán Salcedo et al., 2020, p. 311).

The implementation of measures to reverse the data evidenced by COVID-19 requires changes in the current development model, which overcomes the capital-life conflict and places life at the center. To this end, political and budgetary commitment is key to achieving innovative measures that articulate and generate synergies between different levels and actors: putting caregivers and the work that sustains life at the center.

REFERENCES

- Alemán Salcedo, E., Páez Cuba, L. D., & Zuloaga Lojo, L. (2020). El cooperativismo en España y Cuba: Ideas convergentes sobre la participación de las mujeres. *Cooperativismo y Desarrollo*, 8(2), 296-314. <https://coodes.upr.edu.cu/index.php/coodes/article/view/325>
- Bango, J., & Piñeiro, V. (2022). Políticas de cuidados en América Latina y el Caribe. Avances y desafíos en su implementación. *EuroSocial*, (107). <https://eurosocial.eu/biblioteca/doc/politicas-de-cuidados-en-america-latina-y-el-caribe/>
- Campoalegre Septien, R., Manreza Paret, Y., González Collazo, O., López Sotolongo, F. R., Chávez Negrín, E., Samón Quiala, M., & Barriel Díaz, Y. (2021). *El trabajo de cuidados desde la perspectiva familiar en diálogo con las políticas públicas*. Publicaciones Acuario / Centro de Investigaciones Psicológicas y Sociológicas. <https://biblioteca-repositorio.clacso.edu.ar/handle/CLACSO/169524>
- ECLAC. (2017). *Estrategia de Montevideo para la Implementación de la Agenda Regional de Género en el Marco del Desarrollo Sostenible hacia 2030* (LC/CRM.13/5). Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe. <https://www.cepal.org/es/publicaciones/41011-estrategia-montevideo-la-implementacion-la-agenda-regional-genero-marco>

- ECLAC. (2021a). *Panorama Social de América Latina 2020* (LC/PUB.2021/2-P/Rev.1). Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe. <https://www.cepal.org/es/publicaciones/46687-panorama-social-america-latina-2020>
- ECLAC. (2021b). *Estudio Económico de América Latina y el Caribe 2021: Dinámica laboral y políticas de empleo para una recuperación sostenible e inclusiva más allá de la crisis del COVID-19* (LC/PUB.2021/10-P/Rev.1). Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe. <https://www.cepal.org/es/publicaciones/47192-estudio-economico-america-latina-caribe-2021-dinamica-laboral-politicas-empleo>
- ECLAC. (2021c). *Desastres y desigualdad en una crisis prolongada: Hacia sistemas de protección social universales, integrales, resilientes y sostenibles en América Latina y el Caribe* (LC/CDS.4/3). Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe. <https://www.cepal.org/es/publicaciones/47375-desastres-desigualdad-crisis-prolongada-sistemas-proteccion-social-universales>
- ECLAC. (2022). *Una década de acción para un cambio de época. Quinto informe sobre el progreso y los desafíos regionales de la Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo Sostenible en América Latina y el Caribe* (LC/FDS.5/3). Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe. <https://www.cepal.org/es/publicaciones/47745-decada-accion-un-cambio-epoca-quinto-informe-progreso-desafios-regionales-la>
- EIGE. (2021). *Gender equality and the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic*. European Institute for Gender Equality. <https://eige.europa.eu/publications/gender-equality-and-socio-economic-impact-covid-19-pandemic>
- Federici, S. (2013). *Revolución en punto cero: Trabajo doméstico, reproducción y luchas feministas*. Traficantes de Sueños. <https://traficantes.net/libros/revoluci%C3%B3n-en-punto-cero>
- Fraser, N. (1997). *Justice Interruptus: Critical Reflections on the «Postsocialist» Condition*. Routledge. <https://www.routledge.com/Justice-Interruptus-Critical-Reflections-on-the-Postsocialist-Condition/Fraser/p/book/9780415917957>

ILO. (2021). *Avanzar en la reconstrucción con más equidad: Los derechos de las mujeres al trabajo y en el trabajo, en el centro de la recuperación de la COVID-19* [Hoja de datos].

Organización Internacional del Trabajo.

http://www.ilo.org/gender/Informationresources/Publications/WCMS_814506/lang--es/index.htm

Pérez Orozco, A. (2019). *Subversión feminista de la economía*. Traficantes de Sueños.

<https://traficantes.net/libros/subversi%C3%B3n-feminista-de-la-econom%C3%ADa>

Sassen, S. (2003). *Contrageografías de la globalización*. Traficantes de Sueños.

<https://traficantes.net/libros/contrageograf%C3%ADas-de-la-globalizaci%C3%B3n>

United Nations. (2015). *Transformar nuestro mundo: La Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo Sostenible* (A/RES/70/1). Fondo de Población de las Naciones Unidas.

<https://www.unfpa.org/es/resources/transformar-nuestro-mundo-la-agenda-2030-para-el-desarrollo-sostenible-0>

United Nations. (2020). *Policy Brief: The Impact of COVID-19 on Women*. Naciones Unidas.

<https://unsdg.un.org/resources/policy-brief-impact-covid-19-women>

United Nations. (2021). *Nuestra Agenda Común-Informe del Secretario General*. Naciones Unidas.

<https://doi.org/10.18356/9789210010146>

UN Women & ECLAC. (2022). *Hacia la construcción de sistemas integrales de cuidados en América Latina y el Caribe: Elementos para su implementación* (LC/TS.2022/26). CEPAL.

<https://www.cepal.org/es/publicaciones/47898-la-construccion-sistemas-integrales-cuidados-america-latina-caribe-elementos-su>

World Bank. (2022). *Women, Business and the Law 2022*. The World Bank.

<https://doi.org/10.1596/978-1-4648-1817-2>

Conflict of interest

Author declares not to have any conflict of interest.

Authors' contribution

Anabel Garrido Ortolá wrote the manuscript and approves the version finally submitted.



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License