

# *Climate Finance Must Not Leave Indigenous, Afro-descendant and Local Community Women and Girls Behind!*

## OUR CALL TO ACTION



The historic USD1.7 billion [pledge](#) made at the UNFCCC CoP26 in Glasgow by governments and donors in support of Indigenous Peoples (IP) and local communities (LC)s' collective and territorial rights is a step in the right direction. However, if it intends to repair the historical gap in direct funding to IPLCs, it must also address the rights of Indigenous, Afro-descendant and local community women and girls' direct access to funding. Climate finance must not leave Indigenous, Afro-descendant and local community women and girls behind.

Governments across the world have also committed funding to ensuring gender equality in CoP26. Canada has committed to target 80% of its USD 4.3 billion climate investments over the next five years towards gender equality outcomes; the UK is working on setting out how USD 223 million in funding will address the dual challenges of gender inequality and climate change; and the USA will invest at least USD 14 million of the Gender Equity and Equality Action Fund towards gender-responsive climate programming. It is imperative that this climate finance fully reaches the Indigenous, Afro-descendant and local community women and girls who are on the frontlines and playing a key role of protecting and restoring our territories.

At the United Nations' 66th Commission on the Status of Women (CSW66), integrating gender perspectives into climate change and environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programs took center stage. Reiterating the Agreed Conclusions at CSW66, specifically in line with sections 23 and 24, climate finance must not render invisible the invaluable roles that Indigenous, Afro-descendant, and local community women and girls play, particularly their contributions to climate action, preserving traditional knowledge and livelihoods, strengthening gender justice, and supporting human and tenure rights movements.

This financing must also strive to prevent and mitigate the adverse impacts of climate change, climate initiatives, and policies that are detrimental to these communities and women in order to ensure sustainable and dignified lives for all. As we move toward UNFCCC CoP 27 in Egypt in November 2022, it is crucial that measures to ensure that the commitments made at CoP26, as well as those from governments, are put in practice in a transparent manner and recognize the roles that women and girls play in climate mitigation, adaptation and land protection.

In 2016, the Intergovernmental Economic Organisation (OECD) found that nearly USD10 billion was earmarked for civil society organizations (CSOs) fighting for gender justice. **Yet, just 8% of these funds have reached CSOs working in developing countries, and only a fraction reportedly went to grassroots women's rights organizations directly.** In fact, Indigenous women's organizations received [only 0.7%](#) of all recorded human rights funding between 2010 and 2013, despite using, managing, and conserving community territories that comprise [over 50%](#) of the world's land. Even where resources are reaching Indigenous women's organizations, they tend to be inadequate and short-term.

Current global and regional governmental data on women's access to funding is insufficient and inadequate. It is virtually non-existent for Indigenous, Afro-descendant and local community women's groups, organizations, associations and collectives in the Global South which reflects the negligence of governments towards Indigenous, Afro-descendant and local community women and girls.

Indigenous, Afro-descendant, and local community women experience a broad, multifaceted, and complex spectrum of mutually reinforcing and systemic human rights violations. These act together to limit their self-determination and control of natural resources, all influenced by patriarchal power structures and multiple forms of discrimination and marginalization based on gender, class, race, ethnic origin, customs, and socioeconomic status.

In the lead up to CoP 27, we call upon governments, donors, and allies to ask what they can do differently to recognize and support the invaluable roles and contributions of Indigenous, Afro-descendant and local community women in achieving sustainable development and climate goals.

**To forge women's empowerment worldwide, governments and donors must take action for gender equality and gender justice to urgently provide direct funding to the Indigenous, Afro-descendant, and local community women's groups, organizations, associations and collectives in the Global South who have been historically under-supported and under-funded.**

*Specifically, we call upon governments, donors, and their intermediaries and allies for funding for the following initiatives in partnership with Indigenous, Afro-descendant, and local community women's groups, organizations, associations, and collectives:*

- Allocate dedicated funds to secure women's land, forest, and water legal tenure rights by improving and/or creating gender-sensitive policy reforms:
  - Support the processes that ensure the legal recognition and protection of community territories.
  - Create and sustain spaces for critical dialogues on policy reform that includes Indigenous, Afro-descendant, and local community women and girls.
  - Ensure funding to allow women and girls to prepare for dialogues with governments, donor communities and allies to ensure their participation in the design and implementation of policies.
  - Strengthen women's organizations, groups, and movements by continuing to facilitate peer learning, support knowledge and build capacity to develop their rights' agendas.
  - Prioritize gender-sensitive legislation and policy reforms that are consistent with the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and UN Declaration of Indigenous Peoples Rights.
- Provide sustained financial support to ensure strategic leadership and participation of women and girls at decision-making processes at all institutional levels:
  - Map potential leaders among Indigenous, Afro-descendant and local community women and girls.

- Value and acknowledge the position of Indigenous, Afro-descendent, and local community women and girls as rightsholders and actors of change.
- Create sustained fellowships or sponsorship mechanisms to strengthen their leadership.
- Support women's groups, organizations and associations to curate their own projects and initiatives (based on their self-identified needs and interests).
- Build capacity to ensure that women and girls understand their rights and are empowered in their abilities to negotiate within and outside their communities.
- Fund the preservation, revival, documentation and promotion of traditional knowledge and practices.
- Provide and guarantee adequate funding for women's self-determined initiatives and livelihood enterprises ensuring their autonomy and empowerment:
  - Support women's organizational and institutional development ensuring their economic and political agency.
  - Governments must support and prioritize women's economic enterprises and initiatives as well as their business development, and make exemptions and subsidies for women-led small-scale businesses.
  - Provide direct funding to Indigenous, Afro-descendent and local community women and girls to be well-equipped to mitigate, prepare and adapt to the impacts of climate crises and enable them to be resilient and work towards restoration of their territories.
  - Provide direct funding to Indigenous, Afro-descendent and local community women to compensate for the loss and damage caused by climate change and harmful extraction processes.
- Provide adequate funding to establish and enforce safeguarding mechanisms to fortify Indigenous, Afro-descendant and local community women's autonomy and their right to Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), self-determination, and due process as outlined in enabling national and international laws.
- Create mechanisms and institutions at all levels to address and prevent gender-based violence and discrimination:
  - Guarantee funding for the protection of Indigenous, Afro-descendent, and local community women defenders of human and territorial rights.
  - Guarantee funding to support the operationalization of protection mechanisms for these women against violence and criminalization.
  - Fund documentation, research, and participatory mapping on gender-based violence that impacts Indigenous and local community women and girls defenders of human and territorial rights.
  - Fund legal support for these women to access justice and strengthen their awareness of legal systems and processes through paralegal training.

*To ensure funding goes directly to women's organizations and these initiatives, we recommend that donors and allies:*

- Prioritize specific allocation of funds targeting Indigenous, Afro-descendant, and local community women's groups, organizations, associations and their livelihood enterprises, economic initiatives, and human and tenure rights agendas.

- Bilateral, philanthropic, and intermediary donors must remove technical, legal and administrative barriers to guarantee these groups' access to flexible, simplified (easy to follow) and effective funding processes.
- Adapt funding using bottom-up and context-based approaches for gender-inclusive climate finance, and create monitoring frameworks for climate adaptation, resilience, and mitigation informed by women's experiences in accessing and managing these funds.
- Engage in direct dialogue and establish arenas for collaboration with Indigenous, Afro-descendant, and local community women to ensure that these bottom-up and context-based approaches recognize their leadership, expertise, and vision.
- Provide direct funding to support women's roles as frontline environmental, land, and water rights defenders and leaders, and guarantee that this funding as well as grievance redress mechanisms ensure their long-term protection.
- Provide direct funding to the diversity of Indigenous, Afro-descendant and local community women and girls' groups, associations and organizations irrespective of their sizes and structures
- Donors must ensure the compliance with standards of accountability and transparency of governmental commitments and implementing agencies to strengthen women's representation and protection of their rights.
- Donors must make a conscious effort to distribute information about funding opportunities to Indigenous, Afro-descendant and local community women and girls.
- Ensure the representation of Indigenous, Afro-descendant and local community women and girls in internal committees formed by donors for allocating and monitoring of funding commitments.

## List of organizations that have endorsed this Call to Action:



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