

**EQUALITY  
FUND**

FROM GLOBAL SOUTH FEMINISTS  
TO COP26 DECISION-MAKERS:

# RADICAL CHANGE FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE



# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you first and foremost to our Dialogue participants, whose time, energy, and insights made this project possible. You do so much for your communities and our planet. We are humbled by your enthusiasm for sharing your messages with COP26 decision-makers. We hope this report does justice to your thoughtful inputs.

A sincere thank you also to our sister organizations for sharing the invitation with your partners, joining us in Dialogue, and helping disseminate the results: the African Women's Development Fund, the CLIMA Fund, GAGGA, and WEDO. And to the many Equality Fund staff who generously contributed their time and skills—in multiple languages and many ways.

We look forward to continuing to work with you for gender and climate justice.

**Author:** Hilary Clauson, [hclauson@equalityfund.ca](mailto:hclauson@equalityfund.ca)

**Illustrations:** Paula Champagne

**Design:** Anish Parmar

[hello@equalityfund.ca](mailto:hello@equalityfund.ca) | [equalityfund.ca](http://equalityfund.ca) | 1-855-640-1872

[f](https://www.facebook.com/equalityfundCA) equalityfundCA | [t](https://twitter.com/equality_fund) equality\_fund | [@](https://www.instagram.com/equalityfund) equalityfund

**October 2021**



# FROM GLOBAL SOUTH FEMINISTS TO COP26 DECISION-MAKERS:

## RADICAL CHANGE FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

“We do not talk about climate change, but climate crisis. Climate change is here... [and] it is producing a huge and urgent crisis that we need to solve.”

~ Sandra Liliana Luna Delgado, Ruta Pacífica de las Mujeres

The latest (August 2021) Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report was a “reality check,” unless there are immediate, rapid, and large-scale reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, limiting warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius—or even 2 degrees Celsius—will be beyond reach. Failure to do so will have catastrophic consequences for people and planet. The 26th United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of the Parties (COP26) has the potential to be a critical milestone in this fight against the climate crisis. Ambitious, audacious, multilateral efforts are desperately needed.

COP26 will only fulfill its potential if it centres the needs and solutions of the individuals and communities directly impacted by the climate crisis, notably **global South women, young women, girls, and non-binary people in all their diversity**. They are disproportionately affected by climate impacts, from crop failure to water scarcity, natural disasters to conflict and disease. They are also developing and implementing necessary responses to the climate crisis. As a feminist fund, the Equality Fund knows that people who are directly experiencing critical problems are uniquely positioned to express key solutions, and must be at the centre of discussions.

The Equality Fund is an advocate and thought leader on a feminist approach to climate action. Along with the Nobel Women’s Initiative, we co-published Supporting Women’s Organizations and Movements: A Strategic Approach to Climate Action and we participated in Global Affairs Canada consultations on its future climate finance approach.

In September 2021, the Equality Fund convened a Dialogue on Feminist Climate Action with over 30 representatives from women’s rights organizations and feminist movements in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Its aim was to amplify their voices to ensure they are at the forefront and considered by decision-makers before, during, and after COP26.



# SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Dialogue participants developed recommendations for COP26 decision-makers, organized around three broad themes:

## 01

### **Adopt a people – and nature-oriented development framework that recognizes and advances human rights, in particular women’s rights and Indigenous peoples’ rights.**

Dialogue participants called for transformational change to the extractive, exploitative systems that are causing the climate crisis. Beyond mitigation and adaptation efforts, this type of change requires: support for sustainable, community-led production, consumption and development; respect for Indigenous knowledge and solutions and Indigenous sovereignty over natural resources; and treatment of the care economy as a climate action intervention.

## 02

### **Increase the accessibility of climate finance for women’s and feminist organizations**

Despite being under-resourced and under-recognized among climate actors, local women’s and feminist organizations offer effective solutions to the climate crisis. Dialogue participants recommended increasing climate finance to these organizations. Existing funding mechanisms like the [\*Global Alliance for Green and Gender Action\*](#) (GAGGA) and the [\*Equality Fund\*](#) can be employed. Processes and funding requirements of the [\*Green Climate Fund\*](#) and the [\*Adaptation Fund\*](#) can be modified to ensure greater access. Funding should be long-term, predictable, and flexible as women’s and feminist organizations tackle the climate crisis and the myriad issues and inequalities that ripple from it.

## 03

### **Establish the preconditions for civil society-led, trusted, and safe partnerships among women’s and feminist organizations, governments, and the private sector.**

While COP26 calls for “accelerated action” on collaboration between governments, businesses, and civil society, Dialogue participants raised concerns. Climate negotiation agendas are dominated by private sector and government interests. These actors perpetrate marginalization, discrimination, and violence against women and Indigenous human rights, environmental, and land defenders. Before partnerships are possible, foundations must be laid, notably: supporting, recognizing, and promoting women and Indigenous people’s leadership, including young women; respecting Indigenous peoples’ rights over ancestral lands and resources; and protecting women and Indigenous human rights, environmental, and land defenders.

# HOW FEMINIST MOVEMENTS SEE THE CLIMATE CRISIS



The ways that Dialogue participants understood the climate crisis sparks **urgency** and points to **human-rights based, intersectional, and transformational paths to climate justice**.

Broadly, Dialogue participants saw the climate crisis differently from the dominant view expressed by the UNFCCC and COP (at least as originally conceived).

During the Dialogue, [Women's Environment & Development Organization](#) (WEDO) Director Bridget Burns explained how, over the past 26 years, COP has treated climate change as a technical issue, i.e. "Let's measure carbon and see how much we can limit it." People have been somewhat left out of the picture, both in terms of who is responsible for producing the most greenhouse gases, and who suffers the consequences.

"Climate justice means...  
tackling the root causes of the climate crisis—including unsustainable production, consumption, and trade—while making progress towards equity and the protection and realisation of human rights."

~ **Menka Goundan**, Women's Fund Fiji

Dialogue participants resoundingly brought people into the climate crisis picture. When people are front-of-mind, climate change becomes climate crisis. One participant flagged that the climate crisis is already here, "a huge and urgent crisis that we need to solve." A people-centred approach also means making progress towards equality and the protection and realisation of human rights while tackling the root causes of the climate crisis. It is about identifying who is responsible for greenhouse gas emissions ("the first and last names of the big companies that are extracting fossil fuels") and holding them responsible. It is also about identifying who is most vulnerable to climate change, resourcing their adaptation and resilience and protecting their human rights.

Participants saw the climate crisis through an intersectional lens. The impacts of the climate crisis are experienced differently by individuals and groups depending on their overlapping identity factors like gender, race, and Indigenous status. One participant, whose organization is led by and works for Indigenous women with disabilities, flagged that the intensity of the climate crisis is higher for those with multiple and intersecting identities. That said, the same participant called for changing the words we use, like "vulnerable" and "marginalized." She highlighted how women and girls, especially Indigenous women and girls, have been at the forefront of climate action and are claiming their space in environmental and climate justice movements.

Just as Dialogue participants saw the climate crisis differently, they articulated a way forward that diverges from the dominant perspective. Many participants were concerned that the same actors who caused the climate crisis are the only ones designing the solutions. All too often, these actors are limited by a capitalist, patriarchal, and colonial frame. One participant noted a pervasive “capitalist” focus on mitigating damage—rather than avoiding harm in the first place—and called for “reclaiming or transforming” this broken model. She was inspired by feminists, Indigenous communities, and Afro-descendants in Colombia who have a harmonious relationship to the environment and knowledge of protecting and caring for life and territory. Likewise, an Indigenous participant from Guatemala called for learning from Indigenous ways of living with nature that have worked for thousands of years, rather than those that have caused environmental destruction and led to violence against people defending human rights and nature.

According to WEDO’s Bridget Burns, when women’s rights organizations and feminists entered the climate action space to talk about women’s rights and gender equality, they were told they did not belong. Thanks in large part to their advocacy, the last 10 years has seen a significant shift. This shift culminated at COP25 in a

robust ***Gender Action Plan*** and a growing recognition of the importance of centring the perspectives of grassroots feminists and activists. As the climate crisis grows in urgency and status quo solutions do not go far enough, it is crucial to bring the voices of women’s rights organizations and feminist movements in all their diversity to the forefront of climate discussions—at COP26 and beyond.

“Women’s organizations and feminist movements are taking a broader look at the problem of climate change.

We see how classism, patriarchy and racism are intertwined to accelerate the destruction of the planet.

We as Indigenous women talk about putting life at the centre as part of the political project.”

~ **Milvian Aspuac,**

Asociación Femenina para el Desarrollo de Sacatepéquez





# LOCAL CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS AND SOLUTIONS

When discussions rest at the global level, they obscure the climate impacts on specific places and people. They talk of global temperature increases of 1.5 degrees Celsius or more, without considering flooding and droughts, severe storms, thawing permafrost, and rising sea levels. Or they describe these impacts without considering their ripple effects on societies, communities, families, and individuals.

Rooted in the diverse communities they serve, Dialogue participants offered local perspectives on climate change impacts. They pointed to the need to resource local interventions that respond both to the climate crisis and related gender and social inequality impacts, thus spilling out of traditional “adaptation” and “mitigation” buckets. The work of the Cordillera Women’s Education Action Research Center in the Philippines provides one example.

# INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES IN THE CORDILLERA

Representatives from the ***Cordillera Women's Education, Action Research Center*** (CWEARC) and the Innabuyog Alliance of Grassroots Women's Organizations in the Cordillera brought us to the Indigenous villages of the mountainous Cordillera region of the central Philippines.

While broadly, the Philippines population faces negative climate impacts, the Indigenous peoples of the Cordillera are particularly vulnerable. As stewards of their ancestral land and its natural resources, their lives and livelihoods are "intrinsically linked to nature." Climate change is causing both prolonged rains and droughts. Landslides are destroying rice fields, houses, and human lives and causing a proliferation of crop-harming pests. The rainy and dry seasons have become unpredictable, disrupting the traditional agricultural cycle of preparing the land, planting, harvesting, and letting the land rest.

Not only does this disruption compromise Indigenous communities' food security, it also means a loss of traditional practices defined by a set agricultural calendar – and a loss of related values around sharing, mutual support, and cooperation. The Dialogue participants attributed these losses to misunderstandings among community members and ultimately a "tearing of the social fabric." Women in particular are bearing the brunt of this stress, being traditionally responsible for the daily food needs of their families.

Layered on to the climate crisis, these Indigenous Cordillera communities are "unwilling hosts to infrastructure that impacts on our livelihoods and safety," like large scale mining and dams on river systems. A tailings dump collapsed under a monsoon's torrent, polluting local water sources and destroying rice fields. Women are at the forefront of environmental defence, asserts Innabuyog's Virginia Dammay. Tragically, Indigenous peoples' resistance has been met with military response. Women human rights defenders have been "slapped with trumped up cases."

While the Philippines is a signatory to the UNFCCC Paris Accord, there is a gap between national commitments and local communities' participation in them. Marginalized groups should have a voice in these mechanisms. "Nothing about us without us," Abie Anongos of CWEARC sums up. She calls for a fundamental shift in development practice to promote efforts that are sustainable, that are not extractive, that protect human rights and Indigenous peoples' collective right to self-determination.

As Indigenous-led organizations, "Our historic action to defend our territories and resources is already our contribution to climate action," explains Anongos. Agriculture, forestry, and water management are guided by Indigenous knowledge. CWEARC runs a research and Indigenous knowledge systems program that advocates to the public for greater recognition of traditional and community knowledge in addressing the twin climate and ecological crises. They advance their advocacy positions from municipal to national levels and facilitate women's leadership in working on issues that affect them and their ancestral lands. The two organizations are part of an Indigenous movement in the Philippines that asserts self-determination and governance of ancestral land and resources.

CWEARC and Innabuyog and the communities they serve are on the frontlines of the climate crisis, and are bravely at the forefront of climate action solutions, despite significant hurdles. Keeping local communities front-of-mind pulls atmospheric COP deliberations down to earth.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

Women's and feminist organizations are wrestling with climate crisis impacts and offer important perspectives and solutions. During the Dialogue, participants thoughtfully and enthusiastically generated recommendations for governments, the private sector, and NGOs. The Dialogue featured a diversity of views, with participants emphasizing different priorities and suggestions for urgent action.

These recommendations are organized around the four COP26 goals. They provide COP26 decision-makers with starting points to advance the official goals in ways that serve feminist movements and the communities

they represent. The recommendations also point to perceived shortfalls in the goals and the COP process itself—a reminder of the value many feminists place on questioning what is on the formal global agenda and how it is implemented.

Participants also recommended implementing existing commitments, specifically the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Sustainable Development Goals 5](#) (gender equality) and 13 (climate action), and the [Generation Equality Forum's Global Acceleration Plan](#). The green boxes flag where recommendations align with complementary commitments and recommendations.

## COP GENDER ACTION PLAN

To take up many of the Dialogue's recommendations, implementing the [UNFCCC's Enhanced Gender Action Plan](#) would be a significant step. This is especially the case for Gender Action Plan priority areas B (gender balance, participation, and women's leadership), D (gender-responsive implementation and means of implementation, and E (monitoring and reporting). Relevant Gender Action Plan activities include:

- B1. Promote initiatives for capacity-building in leadership, negotiation and facilitation of negotiation for women delegates, including through webinars and in-session training to enhance women's participation in the UNFCCC process.
- D2. Raise awareness of the financial and technical support available for promoting the strengthening of gender integration into climate policies, plans, strategies, and action, as appropriate, including good practices to facilitate access to climate finance for grassroots women's organizations and Indigenous peoples and local communities.

- D3. Promote the deployment of gender-responsive technological solutions to address climate change, including strengthening, protecting and preserving local, Indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices in different sectors and for improving climate resilience.
- E2. Monitor and report on the implementation of gender-responsive climate policies, plans, strategies and action, as appropriate, reported by Parties in regular reports and communications under the UNFCCC process.

The Gender Action Plan could be strengthened by adding activities related to increasing climate finance for women's and feminist organizations and protecting women and Indigenous human rights, environmental, and land defenders.

COP26 Goal 1: Secure global net zero by mid-century and keep 1.5 degrees within reach

COP26 Goal 2: Adapt to protect communities and natural habitats

**Recommendation 1: Adopt a people – and nature-oriented development framework that recognizes and advances human rights, in particular women’s rights and Indigenous peoples’ rights.**

In general, Dialogue participants saw mitigation and adaptation as two sides of the same climate justice coin. They argued that climate justice involves holding historical emitters accountable for mitigation efforts and providing people and communities most impacted by the climate crisis with adequate resources to adapt. Furthermore, while mitigation and adaptation are important, Dialogue participants envisioned a more expansive climate response, one situated within a people – and nature-oriented development framework. They asserted that a radical departure from the same systems and ideologies that are causing the climate crisis is required to move beyond what are seen as “*false solutions*.”

Recommendation 1 complements the Action Nexus for Gender Equality’s *Feminist Agenda for People and Planet*, which argues for a new economic model that addresses multiple forms of inequalities, ensures women’s human rights, and a peaceful and healthy planet for all. This economy would:

- Shift from the disproportionate emphasis on being a “productive economy” into a feminist decolonial green new economy;
- Put the primacy of human rights and well-being of the planet over that of growth and GDP;
- Promote an equitable and just global trade order;
- Redistribute wealth and resources;
- Promote debt justice and a new structure of sovereign debt; and
- Establish global economic governance architecture that is democratic.

**Recommendation 1.1: Governments at all levels (municipal, regional, national) establish programs, policies, and laws to encourage sustainable, community-led production, consumption, and development.**

**Recommendation 1.2: Governments, the private sector, and NGOs respect and promote people’s sovereignty over natural resources, with a focus on that of Indigenous peoples.**

**Recommendation 1.3: Governments acknowledge and support community-led and Indigenous knowledge and practices that ensure care and wellbeing for people and planet.**

**Recommendation 1.4: Governments, the private sector, and NGOs recognize, research, fund, and support the *care economy* as a climate action intervention.**

According to the Feminist Green New Deal’s *Care & Climate: Understanding the Policy Intersections*, the care economy is a “green economy” because:

- It is necessary for sustaining the entire economy and society.
- Care jobs contribute less to climate change than many other sectors of the economy.
- Careers in care are important options for the workforce transitioning to the green economy.

**Recommendation 1.5: Governments identify and hold accountable the biggest emitters of greenhouse gases through laws, fines, and other punishments.**

“We as Indigenous people, as Indigenous women, know that changes are taking place and that we have tools, knowledge, and practices that can help strengthen these changes. However, we also need policies that guarantee and recognize the rights of women and Indigenous people, including youth, because they are our future.”

~ **Lola Cabnal**, Asociación Ak Tenamit

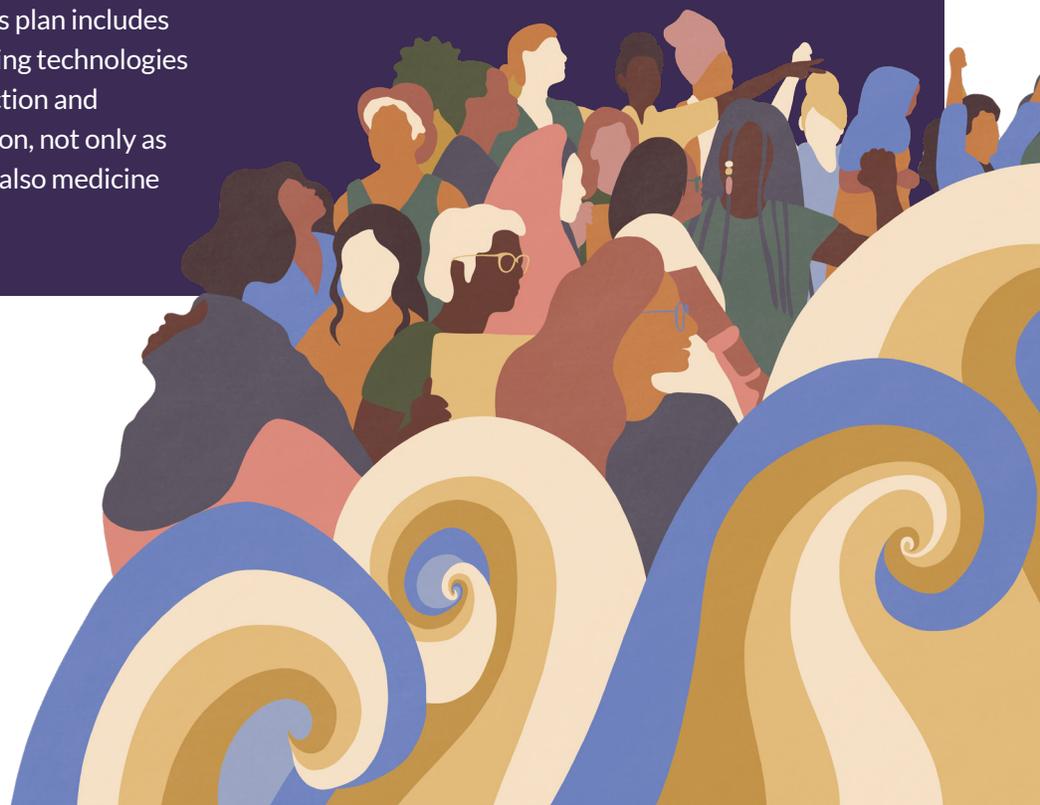
## ISLANDS OF RESILIENCE

Naitasiri Women in Dairy Group, made up of 31 women dairy farmers in the interior of Viti Levu, Fiji’s main island, operates dairy farms in a male-dominated industry, shifting social norms and decision-making power in their communities.

They are also grappling with the effects of the climate crisis. Floods and tropical cyclones are damaging their farming infrastructure and disrupting their ability to supply milk to the Fiji Dairy Cooperative Limited. Hotter temperatures are causing lactating cows to feed less, dropping their milk production. Women dairy farmers are at risk of losing the income they need to support their families and maintain their independence.

In response, the Naitasiri Women in Dairy Group put pen to paper. Their strategic business plan includes investigating cattle rearing and feeding technologies to reduce the risk of low milk production and diversifying into mushroom cultivation, not only as an alternative source of income, but also medicine for their cattle.

In response to the twin crises of climate change and global pandemic, women’s rights organization Rise Beyond the Reef launched the Basa Exchange. Based on traditional trading systems, Rise Beyond the Reef purchases root crops and fish from rural communities and supplies them to urban, food insecure households severely affected by COVID-related job losses and isolation. The Basa Exchange has purchased fresh root crops and fish from over 1,500 remote households, which has helped feed over 2,500 households and 500 individuals in urban centres.



## COP26 Goal 3: Mobilise finance

### **Recommendation 2: Increase the accessibility of climate finance for women's and feminist organizations.**

Recommendation 2 aligns with the Generation Equality Forum's *Global Acceleration Plan* Action 1 under "Feminist Action for Climate Justice:"

"By 2026, increase the percentage of global climate finance flows, public and private, directed towards and invested in gender-just climate solutions in particular at grassroots and rural levels, including through an increase to 88% in the proportion of marked climate bilateral finance targeted towards gender."

Climate finance in the order of billions, even trillions, of dollars is needed to meet the magnitude of the climate crisis. Goal 3 aims to galvanize *Annex 1* countries to meet the annual \$100 billion climate finance target and all COP parties to "unleash the trillions in private and public sector finance required to secure global net zero." Dialogue participants urged COP26 decision-makers to consider not only the quantity of climate finance, but also the actors it reaches.

Many Dialogue participants expressed frustration that climate investments rarely reach local organizations. Between 2013 and 2016, *less than 10% of climate finance targeted the local level*. Data do not exist on how much goes to women's rights organizations specifically. However, just *1% of official development assistance for gender equality and women's empowerment reaches women's rights organizations*, and *only 3% of aid to climate change targeted gender equality as a principle objective*.

Unfortunately, the sheer scale of climate finance may erect a barrier to it reaching grassroots efforts. *The Association for Women's Rights in Development and Mama Cash* found that one "stumbling block" that inhibits funding for feminist movements is pressure to move significant budgets quickly, leading to an unfortunate bias toward a few large organizations that can absorb large amounts

of funding. However, mechanisms already exist, and others can be improved upon, to flow climate finance to women's and feminist organizations doing vital yet under-resourced climate justice work.

#### **Recommendation 2.1: Governments increase multilateral funding to and improve the accessibility of the Green Climate Fund and the Adaptation Fund for women's and feminist organizations.**

WEDO's *Feminist Climate Finance Brief* explains that the Green Climate Fund and the Adaptation Fund are conducive to flowing climate finance to women's and feminist organizations because they are climate-specific, have specific gender policies, and have direct access to national-level organizations.

#### **Recommendation 2.2: Governments and other funders strengthen mechanisms for diverse groups and communities to access climate finance, either directly or through local government or other partners or stakeholders (examples in the box below).**

#### **Recommendation 2.3: Governments and other funders provide multi-year, unrestricted climate finance to women's and feminist organizations so they can identify and implement their own climate action priorities.**

#### **Recommendation 2.4: Ensure that local actors, notably women's and feminist organizations, have an active and meaningful say in the allocation of climate finance, as well as in the implementation and monitoring.**

Recommendation 2.6 aligns with the Generation Equality Forum’s Global Acceleration Plan Action 4 under “Feminist Action for Climate Justice.”

“By 2026, at least 20 countries demonstrate increased use of gender-environment statistics for policy-making by creating an enabling environment for and increased production of gender-environment statistics.”

**Recommendation 2.5: Governments, NGOs, and civil society invest in monitoring, reporting, and sharing lessons learned on the climate actions of women’s and feminist organizations to understand their effectiveness and potential for scale.**

**Recommendation 2.6: Governments, NGOs, and civil society improve tracking and accountability of climate finance, including how much climate finance reaches women’s and feminist organizations.**

## FEMINIST CLIMATE FUNDING

Mechanisms to fund organizations and movements at the intersection of women’s rights and climate already exist, for example the following organizations, all of whom participated in the Dialogue. Climate finance contributors can fund them, learn from them, and/or look to them as models to set up additional mechanisms.

***The African Women’s Development Fund (AWDF)*** is a grantmaking foundation that supports local, national and regional women’s organisations working towards the empowerment of African women and the promotion and realisation of their rights. AWDF empowers women with the resources and capacity building to effectively adapt to the negative impacts of climate change. To support these efforts, AWDF is currently seeking Green Climate Fund accreditation.

***The CLIMA Fund*** is a collaboration among Global Greengrants Fund, Grassroots International, Thousand Currents, and Urgent Action Fund for Women’s Human Rights. It supports funders to directly invest in grassroots climate change movements. CLIMA Fund members have annual budgets totalling more than \$35M USD and have disbursed over 15,000 grants to grassroots organizations and movements in 168 countries.



Members of the Association of Women in Media (AFEM) demand respect for women’s rights in a provincial assembly, Democratic Republic of Congo

***The Equality Fund*** provides core, flexible, long-term funding for global South local, national, and regional women’s and feminist organizations across intersections of feminist work, focusing on making funding accessible to feminist groups most in need of support.

***The Global Alliance for Green and Gender Action (GAGGA)*** is a network of 16 women’s funds, six environmental justice funds, 30+ NGOs, and 400+ grassroots groups across more than 30 countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. GAGGA facilitates links between women’s rights and environmental justice groups and movements, provides small grants and capacity strengthening, and supports members’ advocacy work.

## COP26 Goal 4: Work together to deliver

### **Recommendation 3: Establish the preconditions for civil society-led, trusted, and safe partnerships among women’s and feminist organizations, governments, and the private sector.**

While COP26’s goal 4 calls for “accelerated action to tackle the climate crisis through collaboration between governments, businesses, and civil society,” many Dialogue participants suggested the foundations for such partnerships are currently absent. The climate negotiation agendas are dominated by private sector and government interests. Civil society leadership is tokenized or sidelined. Private sector and government actors perpetrate marginalization, discrimination, and violence against women and Indigenous human rights, environmental, and land defenders. In 2020, *Global Witness* identified a record 227 lethal attacks on environmental and land defenders. These are far from ideal conditions for collaboration among women’s and feminist organizations, governments, and the private sector.

“We will not be working with these companies because what is in their minds is profit. My call is ‘Stop invading our territories, stop invading our resources.’ For the government, ‘Respect our rights over our ancestral lands and resources.’”

~ **Virginia Dammay,**  
Innabuyog-Alliance of Grassroots Women’s  
Organizations in the Cordillera

Dialogue participants outlined three recommendations that are preconditions to building partnerships:

#### **Recommendation 3.1: Support, recognize, and promote women in all their diversity (including young women and girls) and Indigenous people’s leadership.**

Recommendation 3.1 aligns with the Generation Equality Forum’s Global Acceleration Plan Action 2 under “Feminist Action for Climate Justice:”

“Increase the proportion of women and girls in decision-making and leadership positions throughout environmental governance and sectors relevant for transitioning to an inclusive, circular and regenerative green economy by 2026.”

**3.1.1: Governments place the vision and leadership of women and Indigenous peoples at the centre of climate action partnerships.**

**3.1.2: Track and increase women, young women, girls, non-binary peoples and Indigenous people’s participation in COP negotiations.**

**3.1.3: COP participants create spaces for non-English speaking global South feminists to have their voices heard in COP negotiations.**

**3.1.4: Governments devote resources to educating youth on the climate crisis and the COP process to empower them to take up leadership roles.**

**3.1.5: COP participants bring the results of COP negotiations to women and Indigenous peoples, with a focus on rural and remote communities who otherwise might not have access to these results.**



“There is a need for greater visibility of Black women and activists. And then you have to question what happens when it comes to queer persons? Or disabled persons? We need to consider how these persons are included, or rather, excluded from the conversation.”

~ **Nneka Nicholas**, Intersect Antigua

### **Recommendation 3.2: Respect Indigenous peoples’ rights over ancestral lands and resources**

- 3.2.1: Governments ratify and implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.**
- 3.2.2: Governments and the private sector ensure Indigenous peoples give free, prior, and informed consent for development/economic projects.**
- 3.2.3: Governments and the private sector ensure that Indigenous peoples benefit from and do not lose land, natural resources, and livelihoods because of development projects.**

### **Recommendation 3.3: Protect women and Indigenous human rights, environmental, and land defenders.**

- 3.3.1: Governments provide legal and regulatory measures to protect women and Indigenous people from human rights violations caused by private business actors.**
- 3.3.2: Governments ensure state activities respect and protect human rights and that effective recourse is available in the event of human rights violations related to non-state actors’ activities.**
- 3.3.3: Latin American states ratify and implement the Acuerdo de Escazú, the first international treaty to include provisions on the rights of environmental defenders. Use the Acuerdo as a model for other geographies.**

## **COP LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLES PLATFORM**

The UNFCCC Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform is a key forum where Dialogue recommendations could be advanced. This platform’s objectives are to:

- Strengthen the knowledge, technologies, practices, and efforts of local communities and Indigenous peoples related to addressing and responding to climate change.
- Facilitate the exchange of experience and the sharing of best practices and lessons learned on mitigation and adaptation in a holistic and integrated manner.
- Enhance the engagement of local communities and indigenous peoples in the UNFCCC process.

## AGUA Y VIDA, CHIAPAS MÉXICO

In Chiapas, México, extractive activities destroy hills and biodiversity, affecting the ecological balance. Mining, monoculture, agribusiness, dams, large highways and other projects cause landslides, floods, forest fires, soil destruction, changes to the tides, death of aquatic life, forced displacement, persecution, rape, forced disappearances, and executions of women environmental defenders.

Angélica Schenerock with Agua y Vida finds that the dominant narrative of climate change “Fails to

see its relationship with extractive companies and the inequalities between the global North and the global South.”

Women’s and feminist organizations and movements are denouncing false solutions and organizing themselves to carry out concrete actions for the defence of the territory (including geographical, historical, political, economic, and cultural aspects): ecofeminism, agroecology, permaculture, and the recovery of ancestral knowledge on health, food, and spiritualities.

“I ask that COP26 decision-makers really commit to change. That means betting on policies that prioritize the local and the small. Policies that are not extractive and do not perpetuate the colonial model over 500 years old. I ask that they abandon their false solutions, which have resulted in corruption and profit from the suffering of the people who live the effects of climate change on their skin. I call for a real change in the patriarchal perspective of the economy and for a feminist economy, based on the care of all forms of life, human and non-human.”

~ **Angélica Schenerock**, Agua y Vida



# FINAL THOUGHTS

Global eyes are on Glasgow. Frontline activists are urging meaningful investments and agreements from world leaders. Dialogue participants noted again and again the devastating impact of lack of action. Their recommendations provide direction and inspiration.

However, several participants were pessimistic regarding the potential of COP26 to deliver meaningful climate action. They did not see the COP as a productive or friendly space for feminists. One participant argued that UN climate processes are “corrupted” by government and private sector interests, with only “tokenistic” civil society inclusion and participation. She argued that civil society’s role is being critical of these processes from the outside.

One participant, representing the Senegalese Organisation Lumière Synergie pour Développement, is organizing a “counter-COP.” This participant explained that COP has a predefined agenda that may not match local and grassroots priorities. The counter-COP intends to elevate these priorities by drafting and communicating a declaration to the Senegalese government and the Africa Climate Justice Group.

Despite these differences in tactics, Dialogue participants were united around the hard reality that the world faces an existential crisis. Radical change for climate justice demands action by those working within and outside COP, at the local, national, and international levels. Women’s and feminist organizations are key climate justice actors in their own right, and have important perspectives and recommendations for other actors in the climate action ecosystem. The world would be wise to resource their efforts and listen to their recommendations, at Glasgow and toward a brighter, cooler future.



# ANNEX: ABOUT THE DIALOGUE FOR FEMINIST CLIMATE ACTION

The Dialogue convened over 30 representatives from women's rights organizations and feminist movements in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. The invitation was sent to Equality Fund and [African Women's Development Fund](#) grantee partners, the [GAGGA](#) network, and [CLIMA Fund](#) partners. The Dialogue consisted of two two-hour Zoom sessions, with the option to provide input in writing and/or by video. Simultaneous interpretation was provided in English, French, and Spanish in order to work towards greater inclusivity and exchange across regional groups.

The Dialogue attracted participation from organizations tackling a wide range of gender equality and women's rights issues. The Equality Fund invited all grantee partners, regardless of whether they focused on climate action, to acknowledge the interlinked nature of gender inequality's manifestations and the climate crisis. A

poll during session 1 found that approximately half of participants worked "exclusively on responding to the climate crisis or in the area of environment, including the climate crisis." The other half "focused on other issues, but saw responding to the climate crisis as linked to them."



Women's Funds included the African Women's Development Fund, CLIMA Fund, Fiji Women's Fund, Fondo Semillas (Mexico) and XOESE (the Francophone women's fund). Women's rights organizations included: those led by and working for Indigenous women, LGBTQ women, women with disabilities, and youth; and working on issues such as agriculture and food security, reproductive health and rights, and violence. This diverse participation is a testament to the interconnected nature of gender equality and climate action – and the need for a multi-sector response to the climate crisis.

In an effort to shift power to global South women's and feminist organizations, the Dialogue was co-designed with Dialogue participants. [Hidden power, also known as agenda-setting power](#), is about who influences decisions or sets the agenda behind the scenes. Thus, the Dialogue brought the "behind the scenes" to participants, while providing support to their leadership as needed, in respect of the many demands on their time.

Developed with participants, the Dialogue's goals were:

- To support global South feminist climate activists to be heard, on their own terms, in COP26 discussions.
- To increase the understanding among climate decision-makers of the work being carried out by women, young women, girls, and non-binary people-led climate activists (including their priorities, solutions, and asks).
- To build awareness of the critical importance of increasing support (financial and other) to feminist organizations and movements addressing the climate crisis. Encourage related commitments and action.

# EQUALITY FUND

[hello@equalityfund.ca](mailto:hello@equalityfund.ca) | [equalityfund.ca](http://equalityfund.ca) | 1-855-640-1872

 [equalityfundCA](https://www.facebook.com/equalityfundCA) |  [equality\\_fund](https://twitter.com/equality_fund) |  [equalityfund](https://www.instagram.com/equalityfund)