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THE LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND MUNICIPAL AUTHORITIES (LGMA) CONSTITUENCY

COP31 Guidance for Negotiators on GENDER EQUITY

The LGMA Guidance for Negotiators accompanies the LGMA COP31 Position and provides detailed recommendations, context and proposed negotiating text, setting out how each ask can be operationalized.

cities-and-regions.org/cop31-lgma-position



The future of climate action must be equal: local leadership for democratic and resilient territories

As the climate crisis reflects the social, economic, and political choices that shape our societies, some defining questions begin to surface: *How do we build our collective response? Whose voices are heard? Whose knowledge guides action? And whose lives are protected?* Addressing the climate emergency requires transforming the structural inequalities that undermine resilience and shape how climate impacts are experienced and recovered from. The true costs of the climate crisis extend far beyond infrastructure and economic losses, falling disproportionately on those already facing intersecting inequalities and, importantly, on local, regional and subnational governments. A territorial approach to loss and damage must therefore empower local, regional and subnational governments to lead inclusive recovery, ensuring that reconstruction redistributes resilience and opportunity rather than reinforcing unequal power relations and unpaid care burdens.¹

Through local democracy and public services conceived as local care systems, from housing, mobility, and land use to water and sanitation, local, regional and subnational governments determine whether global climate commitments deliver on their promise for people and territories. In cities and subnational governments across the world, feminist subnational leaders, together with Indigenous Peoples, local communities, and grassroots, youth, and women-led movements,² are demonstrating meaningful leadership in public and community-led climate action grounded in care, solidarity, and democratic accountability. These approaches offer pathways for more inclusive, intersectional action.

Ahead of COP31, the LGMA calls for equality to become a guiding principle of climate governance through gender-responsive and transformative multilevel action across national, subnational, and local levels. Advancing the Paris Agreement, delivering Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), and acting on the outcomes of the Global Stocktake require the full engagement of local, regional and subnational governments in localizing these commitments, sustained multilevel governance, and the meaningful participation of all people, with particular attention to those facing gender-based and intersecting barriers to inclusion.

The Enhanced Lima Work Programme on Gender and the Belém Gender Action Plan provide a critical framework for gender-responsive climate action. COP31 must translate these commitments into territorial implementation by recognizing local, regional and subnational governments as essential actors in climate governance, delivery, monitoring, and accountability. This requires stronger accountability, gender-disaggregated data, accessible climate finance, institutional mechanisms, and policies that support locally led

¹ Climate change impacts intensify unpaid care responsibilities and transfer the costs of disrupted public services from institutions to households, disproportionately affecting women and those already experiencing inequalities. Local climate action should therefore support the recognition, reduction, and redistribution of unpaid care work through resilient public services, care infrastructure, accessible mobility, social protection, and community-based support systems.

² Local governments generate vital, place-based data and community-level evidence that can reveal who is most affected, where vulnerabilities are concentrated, and how climate impacts are experienced, making them indispensable to targeting climate action effectively and equitably.



solutions that advance equality, resilient public services, and care systems across all areas of climate action. Gender-responsive climate action must address the realities of women and girls facing climate impacts at the community level. Empowering women through decision-making, finance, skills, and leadership opportunities is essential for effective and just climate solutions.

The transition calls for new forms of leadership, governance, and development cooperation rooted in equity, care, and democratic participation. Equity must be treated not as a separate social consideration, but as a condition for effective climate action and for addressing loss and damage in ways that redress, rather than reinforce, existing inequalities. COP31 should establish a clear pathway for translating global climate and gender commitments into financed, measurable, and locally led action, making feminist and local leadership and multilevel governance central to climate justice and resilient recovery.

Gender Equity Working Group

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