



Mecanismo de Participación  
de la Sociedad Civil de América  
Latina y el Caribe para el  
Desarrollo Sostenible - MeSCALC

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*KEY MESSAGES FROM THE PARTICIPATION MECHANISM OF CIVIL  
SOCIETY FROM LAC  
V FORUM OF LATINAMERICAN & THE CARIBBEAN  
COUNTRIES ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT  
AND THE FOLLOW UP REGIONAL OF AGENDA  
2030*

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### **Presentation**

Within the IV Forum of Latin America's and the Caribbean's Countries of Sustainable Development, the Latin American and Caribbean Civil Society Participation Mechanism for Sustainable Development – MeSCALC- organized a plural broad consultation process focused on this year review of the SDG, understood from the perspective adopted by the UN about the integral and indivisible character of the 2030 Agenda.

We identify challenges and proposals in order to contribute to the progress of the 2030 Agenda in the regional countries, with the expectation to improve effective dialogue with our governments for a qualitative contribution towards a new social contract with social justice.

For this reason, the Civil Society Participation Mechanism linked to ECLAC insists on its demand to move from two monologues to a dialogue with the governments. Therefore, we request that the next Forum of Latin Americans and Caribbean's Countries allow the preliminary reports presented by the countries as voluntary reports, the parallel reports of "more light" carried out by the social organizations of the respective countries. In the same direction as building an effective dialogue, we request to include civil society in the preliminary debates of the document of this Forum.

The Civil Society Participation Mechanism has revealed in each Forums of Countries that Latin America and the Caribbean were already in a situation of economic stagnation and the social, environmental, labor and access to fundamental rights indicators even before the COVID 19 pandemic presented itself as a even greater obstacle to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda, which indicates that the current development model is exhausted: we urgently need a New Social Contract, which recognizes life protection, promotes human rights, centralize the recovery that integrates the sustainability of the planet and decent work as primary state policies.

To the pre-existing conditions of poverty, indigence and exclusion, the excess weight of the external debt in many countries, human rights violations, unemployment and labor informality, environmental degradation and the extractive model in force in the region, the outraged living conditions of people in situations of vulnerability, the pandemic aggravated the economic recession, the crisis in the health system and the consequent high rate of mortality and morbidity, access and permanence at all levels of the education system and vocational training, the living conditions of women and men, migrants, refugees, workers, children and adolescents, indigenous peoples, Afro-descendants, people with HIV



Mecanismo de Participación  
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Latina y el Caribe para el  
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and sex workers, informal workers, precarious, self-employed, domestic workers and economy's informal ones.

Being eight years away from the Year 2030, there is no doubt that multilateralism, international cooperation for development, regional organizations and National States have not complied with the agreements signed or given adequate responses to the global crisis caused by the COVID 19 pandemic and they have not been able to implement the appropriate public policies to achieve the goals of the Sustainable Development Goals.

We are still concerned about the continuity of neoliberal policies and the adjustments adopted by most of the countries in the region, which undoubtedly hinder the achievement of the SDGs. In order to accelerate compliance with the 2030 Agenda, a radical change in government action is essential, as well as the implementation of new production and development models that guarantee human rights. We note the lack of indicators and the absence of disaggregated data, which are essential to plan concrete and inclusive measures under a holistic perspective of interculturality and intersectionality. We observe with great concern the advance of corporate interests that threaten to decisively influence the United Nations multilateral system and the modalities of implementation of the 2030 Agenda without democratic legitimacy.

In relation to **SDG 4 Ensure inclusive, equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all**, our main messages are:

- Taking into account the situation of poverty and inequalities in the region and considering the impact of COVID 19, it is essential to strengthen public education as a fundamental human right from childhood throughout life, including for older adults. It is important to guarantee this right at all compulsory levels, ensuring quality and permanent education from birth to higher education. This includes university education and guaranteeing its free, quality, accessible character, ensuring the necessary budget.
- Education must be understood as a public good with unrestricted access secular, throughout life and that guarantees offers for young adults, adults and older adults who have not had the opportunity to access the right to education in the planned times, without considering the migratory, economic, ethnic, faith, sexual, age, gender, or any type of discrimination status and that includes people who due to conflicts with the law are deprived of their liberty. We advocate for an intercultural, emancipatory, transformative, depatriarchal, decolonizing, anti-racist and intercultural education that includes the active participation of the entire educational community.
- Considering the pandemic situation and the needs of the knowledge society, it is necessary to determine the strengthening of community radio stations, access to the internet as a human right; guarantee regional balances and broad coverage in terms of connectivity, equipment and digital skills without any discrimination. The effective access to connectivity as a right requires its consideration as a public good and service by the States, with the guarantee of content sovereignty, free access in public spaces and schools, free of profit, surveillance and intrusion into the intimate orbit from each person.
- A fiscal reform is essential to reduce the regressivity of the current tax schemes in the region and increase the proportion of the national budget dedicated to education. Countries are



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Latina y el Caribe para el  
Desarrollo Sostenible - MeSCALC

required to comply with the Official Development Assistance pledged under the Incheon Declaration. It is within this framework that the countries of our region committed to allocate and comply with a minimum of 6% of GDP and 20% of the national budget for education.

- The complementary policies that help guarantee the human right to education focus on universal social protection, the promotion of universal basic income as a citizen's right, as well as support for households headed by single mothers or single parents.
- We request that comprehensive sex education be completed and progress be made in the regulatory framework and institutions to deal with discrimination, human rights violations, and all types of violence, with special urgency and policies that put an end to gender-based violence which especially affect refugees, Afro-descendants and indigenous women, sex workers, rural women, LGBTQ+ populations, migrant women, people with disabilities in educational settings.
- Recognize and support the different forms of education in communities and towns. The ancestral knowledge, knowledge and the relationship with nature and community in permanent dialogue with the peoples and communities involved.
- It is necessary to consider measures to encourage the schooling of girls, boys, adolescents and young people with transfers of family income associated with school attendance and comprehensive sexual education that promote rights as a fundamental strategy to promote gender equity and respect for sexual diversity, and prevent unplanned pregnancies in adolescence, obstetric violence, as well as early unions or marriages and child sexual abuse.
- Due to the humanitarian migration crisis, it is essential that migrant children and adolescents be guaranteed the right to education.

Regarding **SDG 5 Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls**, the main messages are:

- We demand the promotion and effective application of inclusive measures that do not leave women behind, especially sex workers, home workers, independently and informally, women with disabilities, migrant and displaced women and indigenous women and women of the collective trans, who have been the main excluded groups and that in the period of recovery from the pandemic the creation of decent work is a priority for governments.
- We demand that the States prioritize investments in the care economy; the elimination of the gender wage gap, and the promotion of employment for young women, in all their diversities.
- We reaffirm the ILO framework of the 5 Rs for decent care work”: Recognize, Reduce and Redistribute unpaid care work, Reward and Represent care workers, and urge the ratification of Convention 189 of the ILO, the sanction and enforcement of labor standards for this sector in the countries.
- The recognition and ensure of rights for all informal workers, workers, community workers, social and solidarity economy, and self-employed, including the sector of people who perform sex work, is urgent.
- Taking into account that violence is both individual and collective, we demand that all countries ratify ILO Convention 190, "On Violence and Harassment in the working place" and adopt protection measures for women and girls from a human rights perspective, aimed at



Mecanismo de Participación  
de la Sociedad Civil de América  
Latina y el Caribe para el  
Desarrollo Sostenible - MeSCALC

reducing gender-based violence, which implies investment in prevention and care, including free legal advice and the application of effective justice.

- The generation of necessary mechanisms created by the States in order to have statistics or data on the different forms of violence against girls, young people and women, especially those who live in a situation of greater vulnerability, such as the indigenous population, Afro-descendants, people with disabilities, migrants of sexual diversity, among others.
- In recognition of the permanent leadership of women, despite being limited only to the care tasks, it is imperative to guarantee the involvement of indigenous and tribal peoples, peasant women, rural and grassroots producers in projects aimed at them, from the planning to execution and evaluation, as established by the ILO Convention 169, since this compromises their well-being.

In relation to **SDG 14 "Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development"**, and **SDG 15 "Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss"**, the Civil Society Mechanism of the Forum of Countries for Sustainable Development, states:

- Climate change disproportionately affects disadvantaged groups and people living in developing countries, due to the lack of sufficient social, technological and financial resources to adopt. The degradation of the oceans, seas, marine resources, as well as terrestrial ecosystems is the product of an excessive relationship of the current system with respect to Mother Earth within the framework of the capitalist system that promotes poverty.
- The crisis and the impacts of the pandemic must serve to prioritize the great threats to life that the environmental crisis implies and reinforce their real bond through the dispute over a model of production and consumption that puts the planet and people at the center.
- Climate actions must be driven by a Just Transition towards sustainable societies and economies to ensure an inclusive approach and sustainable solutions. Government inaction and continued business practices will undoubtedly drive more people into poverty. It is urgent to launch another development model that centralizes socio-environmental justice. A change in the relationship model is promoted to generate and strengthen experiences that contribute to the decommodification of Nature, deprivatization, democratization, deconcentrating and decentralization in the management of common goods.
- We reiterate the relevance of the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean (**Escazú Agreement**), the only environmental and human rights agreement in LAC, which emerged at the light of the Rio+20 Summit; first in the world that contains a guarantee for the protection of people and organizations that defend environmental human rights. **We request the prompt ratification of the Escazú Agreement from the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean that have not yet done so, and we advocate the adaptation of national and regional regulations for its effective implementation.**



Mecanismo de Participación  
de la Sociedad Civil de América  
Latina y el Caribe para el  
Desarrollo Sostenible - MeSCALC

- The governments of the region must ensure adaptation and economic compensation for losses and damages, generating policies to prevent, minimize and address the displacement of people as a result of the climate crisis.
- Financing and access to technology transfer are required to face climate change based on principles of justice, transparency and decisions made democratically to change the model of production and consumption.
- Sanctions and expulsions of companies that damage or pollute the land are necessary, that the States refrain from giving facilities and subsidies for the development of extractive projects and, instead, strengthen the instances of environmental control with adequate budgets and with the support of politicians necessary for them to fulfill their role.
- We demand that the States apply the conventions, treaties, declarations that they have adopted in relation to the protection of lands, territories and natural resources and that the right of communities and peoples to live a full and peaceful life be guaranteed.
- Free, prior and informed consultation (FPIC) within the communities where the lands, territories and seas are located must be an obligatory action for companies and governments that want to develop any extractive project, recognizing their contribution and knowledge for the prevention and risk reduction.
- It is necessary that governments recognize and value the knowledge of indigenous peoples in the conservation of biodiversity and the environment and that they work together with communities to design and implement national and local mitigation and adaptation plans.
- Promote the institutionalization and mainstreaming of gender, intercultural, intergenerational, intersectional and individual and collective rights approaches in state policies related to climate change and disasters, by raising awareness and training public officials, including men and women teachers, as well as guaranteeing the allocation of specific budgets.

Regarding **SDG 17, “Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development”**, we reiterate and recommend:

- Today a radical change is urgent, the implementation of a **New Social Contract**, that is: a new paradigm of development, which guarantees the realization of human rights, labor rights, environmental and cultural rights and the acceleration of compliance of the 2030 Agenda.
- We demand that the governments of Latin America and the Caribbean strengthen a multilateral governance system based on solidarity, starting with universal and equal access to COVID-19 vaccines.
- The construction of alliances requires a change in behavior on the part of state actors, the market and civil society. State and multilateral actors must implement commitments in the reform of development cooperation.
- Regarding development cooperation, we express that state and multilateral actors must implement concrete and binding commitments based on solidarity and overcoming asymmetries between countries and peoples. We warn of the processes of increasing privatization of aid and cooperation and the tendency of South-South cooperation in a similar direction to that which we have denounced for traditional North-South cooperation, to which



Mecanismo de Participación  
de la Sociedad Civil de América  
Latina y el Caribe para el  
Desarrollo Sostenible - MeSCALC

is added the decreasing Official Development Assistance. We request that the commitments of Development Cooperation, the principles of South-South Cooperation and compliance with ODA be fulfilled.

- It is essential that funding bodies and UN agencies support countries considered expelling countries so that they reduce the causes of forced emigration, displaced persons and migrants, while supporting transitory or permanent receiving countries to have programs to reduce violence of all kinds and ensure the provision of health services and others on equal terms with the population of the country.
- States must recognize the role of social dialogue as a means to define and implement inclusive and sustainable recovery policies. We reiterate that the transformative progress in the SDGs will not be possible without a fully participatory and active civil society, but equally recognized and incorporated into the development processes, which is the responsibility of the current governments.

7 March 2022