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**International Conference:  
“Global Financing for Gender and Climate Justice: Utopia  
or Reality? A feminist reflection”**

**5 June 2025, Brussels, Belgium**



This report on the **International Conference: “Global Financing for Gender and Climate Justice: Utopia or Reality? A feminist reflection”**, held on **5 June 2025, Brussels**, Belgium, is part of the Erasmus+ project entitled: **"Gender and Climate Justice: Knowledge for Empowerment"**, in brief **COPGendered**. This project builds up tools, knowledge and methodologies for learners to upskill themselves (in groups, individually or with a teacher) in the relationships between gender inequality and the climate crisis. This includes providing tools for adult education providers. The project which lasts for three years ends in November 2025. The associations involved are in this project: WIDE+ (Europe), GenderCC-Women for Climate Justice/LIFE e.V in Germany, WIDE in Austria, GADIP in Sweden, KULU Women and Development in Denmark, Mundubat in Spain and CSCD in Bulgaria.

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**Writer(s):** Gioia Buonsanti based on the contributions from the speakers, of Maëllann Yvin and Allis Millegård

**Proofreading:** Gea Meijers

**Lay out:** Gea Meijers

**With special thanks to** conference participants

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## Report International Conference: “Global Financing for Gender and Climate Justice: Utopia or Reality? A feminist reflection”

5 June 2025, Brussels, Belgium

### 1. Introduction

This afternoon in-person conference reflected on the current political landscape in Europe of an ongoing roll back of funding for climate justice and gender equality. It also discussed what are the main challenges and opportunities for feminist and climate justice activists to not only halt this development but also transform it for a sustainable future. The conference consisted of a plenary panel debate and the world cafe methodology in which participants discussed key recommendations in rotating groups. This conference brought together 35 participants, from 12 countries: Belgium, the Netherlands, UK, France, Spain, Italy, Bulgaria, Albania, Germany, Austria, Sweden, and Denmark.

The roll back is multi-dimensional with different aspects. It stems from a current wave of (ultra-) conservative politics, dominating both the governments in Europe and the EU- that has led to further significant or drastic cuts in Official Development Assistance. This political development also seems to strengthen market- and technology-driven approaches offered as the panacea of climate change. It goes hand in hand with a pushback from these political movements on women’s and LGBTQI\* rights, shrinking of spaces for civil society engagements, combined with a decrease of public finance to address sustainable development.

A feminist reflection on climate justice prioritises an approach towards a fair distribution of financing for prevention and inclusive adaptation of climate impacts. It stresses the need for political solutions, and not mainly technical ones. Unfortunately, as stated this perspective is losing political relevance. The conference was organized as the final transnational public event in the three-year long project: "Gender and Climate Justice: Knowledge for Empowerment", in short COPGendered. It addressed civil society actors that are working towards providing awareness to a European audience and advocacy to its politicians.

WIDE+ and partners have been working together for the Erasmus+ project: "Gender and Climate Justice: Knowledge for Empowerment". The project builds up tools, knowledge and methodologies for learners to upskill themselves (in groups, individually or with a teacher) in the relationships between gender inequality and the climate crisis. This includes providing tools for adult education providers. The project which lasts for three years ends in November 2025. The consortium for this project consists of

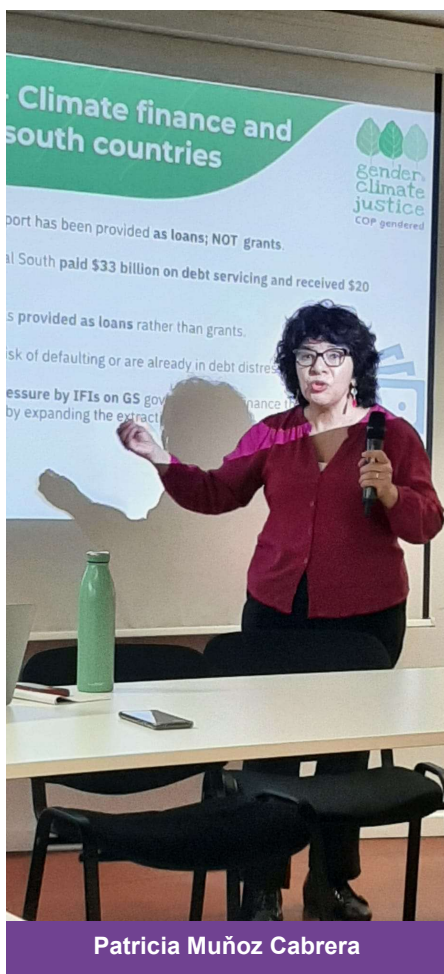


## 3. Introduction Plenary Panel Discussion

The panel followed the traditional structure of a plenary presentation by each speaker followed by a Q and A and finally a group discussion. It was moderated by Edith Paulina Novo. Speakers:

- **Patricia Muñoz Cabrera**, researcher and independent consultant, member of gender and trade Working Group @WIDE+. With: ‘a critical look at the linkages between climate finance, debt and women’s rights.
- **Daniela Pfeffer**, team coordinator of knowledge management & gender focal person Vienna @horizont3000. With: ‘rethinking climate solutions: towards inclusive, locally rooted alternatives.
- **Zahra Hdidou**, Senior Resilience and Climate Advisor @ActionAid UK which is a member @CONCORD. With: ‘financing women-led solutions to climate change and humanitarian emergencies.

## 4. A critical look at the linkages between climate finance, debt and women’s rights, by Patricia Muñoz Cabrera



## 4.1. The macro level: External debt, Covid and Climate vulnerability

It is important to contextualize the current climate finance debate in the global political macro-economic context. The financial flows between countries of the Global North and the Global South suggest a completely different picture as what the climate financing suggest, which is that countries in the North pay for measures in the South. Through the repayment of debt, there is much more money going to countries in the Global North from the Global South than the other way around. She cited research from 2022 that 58 countries in the Global South paid \$33 billion on debt servicing and received \$20 billion in climate finance. And this trend has gotten worse. The doubling of debt-to-GDP ratios in many countries across Sub-Saharan Africa and the Asia Pacific between 2011 and 2021—have been exacerbated by the crises like the COVID-19 pandemic. On top of this already existing debt burden, around half of the climate finance money provided has been through some type of loan-schemes, thus further fuelling this interdependency and money flowing back to countries in the Global North. The situation keeps getting worse as in 2024, 25 countries are at high risk of defaulting or are already in debt distress. The spending through loans creates a vicious cycle of decreasing public spending that governments in the Global South have available.

These financial burdens, she explained, often fall disproportionately on women, who remain excluded from key decision-making spaces yet are left to cope with the fallout on the ground.

## 4.2. The meso level: financial strategies employed by the Bretton Woods institutions (IMF/WB)

Key players at the meso level are international monetary and financial institutes that facilitate the allocation of climate finance. These institutions are often referred to by the term Bretton Woods institutions, named after the first example of such institution, or formally International Financial Institutions (IFI's). Institutions like the IMF and World bank do not only come with money, however. As stated, climate finance is regularly in the forms of loans tied to different conditionalities that are imposed by such financial institutions. Also grants can come with all kinds of conditionalities. The general direction of these conditionalities is to support a macro-economic policy that reinforces existing power imbalances between countries. This is because they are negotiated in a context of already persistent power imbalances in which relations of conditionality are set following a top-down political-economic approach, with the Global South highly dependent on the Global North.

Loans often come when countries are in great need and vulnerability to agree to conditionalities. IFI's demand policy changes of governments receiving them that often mean a reduction of public spending to basic goods like health care in favour of projects which include the promotion of business interests. Among others, there is an increasing pressure on Global South governments to finance their debt and receive climate finance support by expanding the extractive industries in their countries.

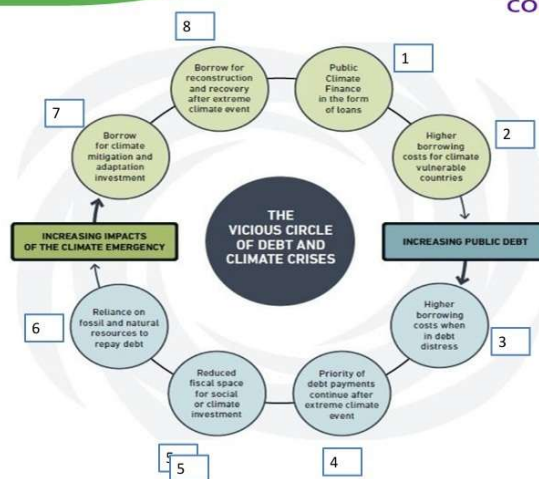
When it comes to the climate financing the main Global North actors, namely the IMF, the World Bank, the Regional Development Banks, the G20 and the EU/MS-Global Gateway, have an approach of a so called 'green' finance that will not resolve the issues related to climate. They don't take responsibility for representing the highest polluters (Global North) and instead they keep on pushing for debt instruments to meet decarbonisation targets, including lending for climate finance. On the other hand, countries in the Global South, who are low level polluters, face the consequences of Global North deflecting responsibility for decarbonisation targets through climate finance.

## 2.1. The nexus debt/climate finance



Climate finance = WB/IMF concessional loans, which are largely invested in mitigation rather than adaptation strategies.

- Non-democratic decision-making: **community members are never consulted and ignore the level of indebtedness of their own countries.**
- **YET they have to bear the debt burden from birth (as per capita debt increases )...**
- **IFIs obstructing gender and intersectional social justice (debt burdens grow/governments roll back (WRUN 2024)**



The conditionalities of the finance have multiple negative effects such as on available public spending. Another common gap is the focus of such projects, even if not loans, to invest in m invested in mitigation rather than adaptation strategies. There is no approach to transform societies to cope better with climate threats. The decision-making process is not a democratic one, as community members are never consulted and ignore the level of indebtedness of their own countries, even though they must bear the debt burden from birth. Thus, the victims at the forefront of this 'greenwashing' approach are the local communities in the Global South.

### 4.3. The micro-local level: the impacts of climate finance in Nepal

Muñoz proceeded by illustrating these dynamics through reviewing the situation in Nepal regarding climate finance. Almost half of the country's GDP is debt-linked, with the debt burden reaching the 46.91% of the GDP in 2025. In this scenario, new "mega-plan" loans risk perpetuating dependency rather than enhancing climate resilience. Out of the country's total debt, 50.83% was due to external loans. Currently in Nepal there are 45 projects linked to climate finance, which leads to a total of 373.5

million \$ dollars, mostly from multilateral banks and the 70% of the climate finance is in loans, thus rising public debt. The latest loan was in 2025. The World Bank provided a new loan for a hydropower mega plant, which does not align at all with people's needs and climate imperatives. It shows how other economic interests are being prioritised in the projects put forward. There are three areas relevant for gender and climate justice that show the interplay between increased climate crises and the impacts of the debt crisis.

- **sustainable livelihoods** (access to food, transport, water, housing and income)
  - One of the effects of climate emergencies is the loss of harvest, shortage of food and increasing prices, shortage of water, destruction of homes and loss of land, jobs and salaries.
  - They can also be the cause of conflicts over access to natural resources (water, land).
  - The debt crisis adds to this already precarious scenario, causing:
    - cuts in government social investment, cuts in food subsidies, inability to fund reconstruction of infrastructure after a climate extreme event.
    - reduction of subsidies (for ex. eliminating support to small scale women farmers, producers, women's cooperatives).
    - preference for entrepreneurship; privatisation of land, water, forests, including trade liberalization to welcome Foreign Direct Investments.
    - labour flexibilization (decreasingly decent work, exploitation of women's labour).
  
- **health** (including SRHR)
  - Health gets affected by climate calamities with a higher incidence of health risks related to the climate crisis (undernutrition, malaria and higher levels of pollution in water and air).
  - These conditions are worsened by the debt crisis that results in privatisation or liberalisation of health services; cuts in governmental investments to replace or acquire up-to-date technology and equipment and to build appropriate infrastructure responding to women's SRHR priorities.
  
- **violence against women and girls.**
  - Finally, VAW gets affected because of the higher risk women and girls face of being placed in unsafe, overcrowded shelters: this happens especially because after a climate extreme event there are fewer resources to provide shelter. Girls get taken out of school and there is an increase in forced marriages, on top of cuts in services for GBV survivors

In Nepal one can witness the intersections of gender with other characteristics of people (like age) intersecting in the impact of climate effects. There has been an increase of unpaid labour and feminisation of subsistence agriculture, as well as a rise in climate-sensitive diseases and maternal health risks. The lack of water, sanitation and hygiene causes girls' dropout. Civil and political rights are affected because there is a total absence of democratic processes. The impacts are especially for

women's rights led or indigenous groups that are not consulted for climate planning, even though they then have to directly face the debt/climate finance burdens.

## 4.4. Chile: creating new debt instruments to finance the European “energy transition”

Another example shown by Muñoz was Chile, where similar instruments aimed at financing Europe's energy transition risk locking local communities into restrictive regulatory frameworks that obstruct their sustainable initiatives. In March 2025 the European Union provided 216.5 million € to finance renewable hydrogen projects in Chile. This was through the Team Europe Renewable Hydrogen Funding Platform for Chile that is part of the European Union's Global Gateway Investment Agenda supporting projects that improve global and regional connectivity.

Green hydrogen, such as through ‘wind’ farms, will not benefit communities but will be mainly exported to Europe. And they have negative impacts on the people on the ground. For example, when it comes to the ‘wind’ farms, constant exposure to the turbines altering people's well-being. And it leads to the loss of livelihoods due to the land grabbing and leads to the threats to human rights defenders when they try to act to protect and promote communities and farmers rights.

The Chilean community has put in place strategies to counter the effects of projects that cause harm to the rural communities, like the ‘wind’ farms. The strategies implemented have been based primarily on having strong legal literacy and in being ready to face court proceedings. They have been successful, as some windmills have been removed and projected ones have been stopped. And a new law was drafted with the aim of setting up a national regulatory framework including measures regarding distance: in residential areas, windmills will need to be 1000 meters away from houses or 10 times the height of the windmill.



**Region affected: Alto Bio Bio , south of Chile**

## 4.5. Proposal from feminists and women's organisations

In closing, Patricia Muñoz advocated for a re-examination of debt mechanisms and called for the integration of human rights impact assessments into all climate finance decisions, underlining that:

- Human rights and nature should be at the heart of climate finance. Global commons are not commodities.
- Climate finance should privilege participatory local sustainable development and not business expansion.

- We should expose the role of climate finance in increasing debt burdens (the nexus between gender, climate and debt justice).
- Urgently needed: human rights impact assessments in debt/climate finance analyses with an intersectional perspective.
- Expose false narratives: ex. framing climate finance schemes as a “green” debt instrument.

## 5. Rethinking climate solutions: towards inclusive, locally rooted alternatives, by Daniela Pfeffer

Daniela Pfeffer is a professional in international development cooperation, with almost 20 years of experience, primarily working with NGOs. Currently she is Management Coordinator for a global knowledge programme and Gender Focal Person at Horizont3000 in Austria.

Pfeffer brought the reflection to the community level, focusing on locally led, gender-responsive solutions. She presented examples from her organisation which does projects in the Global South, specifically in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, and Central America.



### 5.1. the strength of alliance building through the grassroots level to counter climate threats

Emphasizing the strength of grassroots networks, she spotlighted a 35-member pastoralist alliance spanning several countries in East Africa, as an example of collective action promoting livelihoods under threat from climate change as well as local solutions to climate change adaptation and mitigation. The organization was initiated by five indigenous founding organizations in Kenya in 2018 as a social movement and has grown to include nearly 34 members from different counties. It promotes the use and validation of traditional knowledge with a focus on the acceptance and acknowledgement of Pastoralism as an economically productive and climate shock resilient livelihood system across the East African region. Reviving and maintaining pastoral rangelands in East Africa contributes to ensuring local food security and halting natural degradation within the East African rangelands, which is of global benefit.

## 5.2. Policy influence and knowledge exchange through an accountability tool

One practical initiative Daniela shared was a tool, a local accountability mechanism that helps track development and climate finance funds. It also ensures that they reach and involve their intended communities. The tool was created thanks to a leading humanitarian and sustainable development organisation in the northern region of Kenya. The association developed it together with another grassroots organisation in Marsabit County and a communications company. Finally, they had the support from an international development organization.

The tool tracks development funds allocated by the government of the relevant county at the smallest administrative unit, as well as actual projects implemented. In this way it provides accountability for achieving impacts towards the county government, with who the group is collaborating. The tool also serves as a database of examples for others to learn from. Through both objectives the tool enables local communities to drive locally shaped solutions to climate change challenges.

## 5.3. Countering energy poverty in the Global South

Pfeffer also addressed the complex issue of the implications of energy poverty, a situation that is familiar in the Global North in which particularly female headed households are affected. It also affects countries in the Global South and again women, but in a different way. She presented a project that countered the impacts of energy poverty in the Global South.


In the Global South energy poverty has impacts on different areas, such as:

- health (with 3.2 million deaths per year globally due to indoor air pollution).
- education (only the 31% of primary schools in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) has electricity access).
- productivity (which is stuck at a low level, with 2 - 4% GDP loss due to unreliable electricity supply in SSA).
- Safety and wellbeing for women and girls. They face unsafety especially at night without light and they are responsible for firewood collection in 94% of Ugandan households, risking being harmed while they cross the path.
- And deforestation, with the phenomenon of forest cover decline in Uganda going from 24% in 1990 to 9% in 2018.

The approach of 'clean cooking through carbon credits' was then presented with a disclaimer that such schemes, when poorly designed, might be ill-suited to the local environment and can contribute to exacerbating social inequalities and also land grabs, while allowing major polluters to continue emitting greenhouse gases.

Despite these challenges, Daniela presented promising case studies, such as the introduction of sustainable cookstoves, subsidised through contribution claims (shifting away from carbon emission offsetting). In a context in which inefficient and unhealthy cooking practices are common in Uganda, with high expenditure on firewood and high level of deforestation, the introduction of fuel- efficient stoves reduces smoke exposure and saves more than 60 % of firewood, or 5t CO<sub>2</sub> per household per year. These stoves reduce firewood consumption, improve mostly women’s health, and save valuable time. This small-scale initiative delivers impactful solutions that are driven by local needs.

SCENE Project (5y) in numbers	
Nr of stoves	2,696
Customers & students	127,000
Firewood-saving-Potential	60 - 76%
Firewood saved (t)	46,000
Emission reduction (t CO <sub>2</sub> e)	39,000



The second case study presented takes place in Nicaragua. It was implemented in a context ruined by environmental degradation due to land use change, contamination, unsustainable fishing practices, rising climate variability, frequent hurricanes and flooding. The communities involved in this project were highly diverse and located in remote areas hard to access, facing political and economic difficulties with a growing shrinking space for Civil Society.



The approach was based on the training of local leaders on sustainable management of coastal and marine ecosystems and nature-based climate change adaptation solutions in general, strengthening local and female leadership. The promote diversification of agroforestry systems and vegetable gardens with a focus on female farmers. And offer evidence-based technical support for crop management based on participatory analysis of weather data collected by local farmers. The solutions and knowledge provided directly addressed the needs of the communities that are engaged in this project. This was enabled through simple and replicable methods engaging the whole community from students to local sports teams. As an example, beaches were restored (for turtle nesting and community tourism) that were affected by coastal erosion through simple artisanal breakwaters made from local and recycled materials.

## 5.4. Voices from partners: towards more just and effective climate action policies

Concluding, Pfeffer shared recommendations from partners to have more just and effective climate action policies:

- Compensation to Indigenous Peoples for loss and damage from the Global North.

- Shift the focus from mitigation to funding climate adaptation projects.
- Strengthen and increase knowledge & exchanges (sharing platforms) on climate finance for local networks, grassroots organisations as well as indigenous communities.
- Ensure participation of communities from the start and at all levels, ensure contextualisation through co-creation, 'copy paste' does not work.
- Direct funding to Indigenous women grassroots organisations.
- Support affordable, accessible and contextually appropriate uptake of green energy technologies within IPs and pastoralist communities.
- Prevent land grabs/alienation, develop contextual Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) Community Protocols to guide stakeholders on green projects and investments.
- Strengthen and support participation of local communities and indigenous people in international conferences and fora.

## 6. Financing women-led solutions to climate change and humanitarian emergencies, by Zahra Hdidou

Zahra Hdidou is the Senior Resilience and Climate Advisor at ActionAid UK. She has a BA in Geography and African Studies from SOAS/KCL and an MSc in African Development from the London School of Economics. She has worked previously in regional humanitarian response coordination and in rural and sustainable agricultural development in East Africa and Latin America, for a range of UN and non-governmental organisations and consulting firms.

With her contribution she addressed the political dimensions of climate finance and its intersection with gender justice. She argued that current financing mechanisms often prioritize private sector interests -citing the UK as an example- ultimately benefiting corporations rather than the communities most affected by climate change.



### 6.1. Climate finance must centre Gender and Justice

Climate finance is both a political and a justice issue. It is political as the means of implementation of climate policies are always the most contested. The justice dimension enters as flows of money expose

the priorities of the policy: which groups are benefiting from the finance? Does it do justice to the global majority (Global South), in particular more marginalized groups like women and girls? The justice dimension is explicitly recognised in some instruments, like with the ‘Loss and Damage’ approach (compensation for negative climate effects caused). There is a need for climate finance to flow in the right direction towards mechanisms that prioritize climate justice goals, thus benefiting people in the global majority while integrating the interconnectedness of climate and gender justice.

However current climate finance is going in the opposite direction. In the UK, Official Development Assistance budget has been reduced, while the defence budget is increased. In this context, existing funding structures favour International Financial Institutions with their loans, plunging the Global South into further debt. Climate finance also favours public-private partnerships. The common narrative that is presented by politicians is always about the absence of enough public finance and the ‘necessity’ to turn to private finance like the financial sector in the UK, to the benefit of private sectors.

This approach stands in stark contrast with the needs of Global South countries. They need much more aid for climate adaptation and ‘Loss and Damage’; however, the aid continues to be towards mitigation, limiting the possibility of tackling structural problems. Finally, the support for Women’s Right Organisations (WRO) and Womens-Led Organisations (WLO) are failing as a result of aid cuts in the last few years, which dropped by 66% in 2023, despite the UK Women and Girls Strategy.

## 6.2. The climate-conflict-gender nexus: women confronting Loss and Damage in FCAS

Hdidou pointed out that especially women in fragile and conflict-affected states (FCAS) are left out, while they are among the most in need. The reason is that donors favour more stable areas for climate finance. However, the overlapping crises of climate change and insecurity leave women with minimal access to resilience resources. There is a growing interconnectedness between climate change and conflict as conflict undermines efforts to build mechanisms to better face climate change. In FCAS women rights and women’s led organisations could play a vital role, but they face an increased lack of funding for Women Led Organizations, given the reluctance to finance projects in FCAS due to perception of risk intersected with limited priority to project with women’s rights objectives.

Women Rights Organisations and Women Led Organisations are, and have been, implementing a ‘nexus approach’ within their communities, thus responding to multiple compounding risks and tackling them together. WROs and WLOs who are best placed to understand emergency needs, especially in situations where they are multiple problems that are traditionally addressed through different funding streams. There needs to be coherence between humanitarian, development and peace efforts in order to reduce risks and vulnerabilities effectively. The international community must shift power, decision making and funding to WROs and WLOs as they promote more efficient humanitarian action.

## 6.3. Women-led alternatives to climate change in Cambodia

Hdidou illustrated the importance of channelling direct funding to grassroots women's organisations with a women-led advocacy and resilience initiative in Cambodia, which exemplifies how targeted funding can support both adaptation and empowerment. Her association can support existing women networks via local partners and focus their support on combining institutional strengthening and livelihoods approaches to help improve climate resilience and having women-led emergency response, and training for advocacy towards local governments.



## 6.4. What do WROs need?

These initiatives take time to reach their objectives and be effective. There is a need to create community development plans, and the first obstacle is allocating finance. The time needed to establish a plan takes more or less 3 years: this time involves identifying issues and entry points, initiating relationships and developing long term integrated solutions

Women's rights organisations need simplification of funding, and they need to be part of the design of their own projects aimed at building on adaptation, resilience and addressing loss and damages. In order to do that they must be able to access policy dialogue and advocacy spaces to engage in cooperation with partners. And funding modalities should be long-term and flexible.

## 6.5. What can we do?

Hdidou's recommendations thus included simplifying funding processes and ensuring they are long-term, flexible, and inclusive of risk management strategies, especially for those working in volatile environments. She recommended continuing building advocacy movements, reminding everyone that the system change is possible, but it happens slowly, by small steps. Another advice was to show success stories, because they are a practical demonstration of feasible change.

She concluded by sharing the campaign 'Fund our Future', which has as ultimate goal to stop banks financing fossil fuels and harmful industrial agriculture fuelling the climate crisis. Action Aid is going to provide a report that quantifies HSBC's climate damages via its financed emissions. Their investments in harmful industries impact women and girls' rights in the global majority (e.g. Brazil, Tanzania and Bangladesh). The campaign objectives – including holding polluters responsible– will be achieved by

pressuring governments to regulate the banks and by pressuring the banks to stop fuelling the climate crisis.

## 7. Audience Reflections and Questions

One of the questions focused on carbon credits and compensation mechanisms. Pfeffer argued that voluntary schemes could function more equitably if communities were equipped with technical expertise and had decision-making power. She cited the “Climat Collecte” model in Germany as an example of a more participatory approach. Patricia added that in Chile, technical literacy had been instrumental in enabling activists to engage in negotiations with authorities effectively.

Each panellist concluded with actionable insights. Muñoz argued to relocate justice to the community level and to apply human rights-based analyses to debt and climate finance. Finally, we need to challenge the narrative that depoliticization is neutral, it's often a form of weaponization.

Pfeffer pleaded for strengthening grassroots funding mechanisms and shift donor focus to support locally embedded, feminist responses. And Hdidou added to this that it is important to keep building transnational movements, pressure hold banks to regulate themselves, and force polluters to pay. There is untapped potential in holding global financial actors accountable.



## 8. Small group discussion through World Cafe Method

As part of the participatory segment of the conference, participants engaged in a World Café-style group discussion, designed to foster collaborative reflection and practical strategy-building. The format encouraged dynamic exchange. Over two rounds, small groups of 5–7 participants reflected on shared challenges and formulated proposals for feminist action, with participants rotated randomly while project partners remained at the tables to guide continuity.

Two central questions framed the discussions:

- What do you see as main barriers in committing to gender and climate justice financing?
- What should be our key asks to European and national politicians as feminists connected through transnational collaboration?

The World Café discussions underscored the urgency of both addressing entrenched power imbalances and shaping a bold feminist political vision for climate justice. Participants recognised that achieving real change requires structural reforms, intersectional funding strategies, and solidarity across borders and movements. The collective wisdom generated will inform ongoing advocacy and collaboration across the COPGendered network and beyond.

## 4.1. Barriers to Gender and Climate Financing

**The first group identified the political-economic barriers in committing to gender and climate justice financing:**

- Women and those most impacted lack economic power; thus, political action is needed.
- Systemic problems persist in society and thus in politics: LGBTQIphobia, racism, misogyny, privileges, etc.
- There is a lack of political will from governments to promote gender and climate justice as this is not seen as a popular topic (or topics).
- Instead, there are more policies put in place that
  - lead to the criminalisation of activists.
  - There are attacks on NGOs, such as to cut their funding programmes.
  - There is lack of space for people who represent minorities and representative space is given only to people who hold a certain degree/expertise (lack of visibility of the civil society, especially uneducated people); if an organisation does not have the system required it is left out.
- There is a lack of effective mechanisms at international level to assure trade agreements and other agreements adhere to human rights and environmental standards (such agreements on these issues are not binding if the state does not want to abide).
- There is a proliferation of financing of organisations that promote toxic narratives (anti-gender narratives and other terms are used for these narratives and movements).

**The second group explicitly acknowledged the need for an intersectional understanding of the gender and climate justice nexus in finance.** They repeated some of the main barriers in committing to gender and climate justice financing of the first group:

- There remains significant gender/intersectional biases, but these intersections are not considered in all different contexts.
- Donors prefer conditionalities that favour other priorities.
- There is a current backlash in politics promoting ultra-conservative and far-right policies.

- There is inadequate representation (locally/globally) of women and other marginalized communities and people.

**The third group reframed the focus on climate finance as to barriers for women's rights (led) associations to access such funds:**

- Where is the money? When following the finance streams, one sees that there are several barriers faced by civil society, including the selection processes by donors, the fact that donors prefer project-based funding, and also a lack of capacity among civil society, including lack of knowledge on possibilities of funding; lack of resources to find and apply for funding; and-competition between organisations.
- A particular constraint is the design of the funds -often only environmental topics, lack of the woman perspective.
- Part of the limited information is a weak information distribution about women and climate justice, especially when it comes to finding private donors.
- Also this group noted the change of political focus from climate & women issues to military and weapons
- And finally in policy there is lack of mainstreaming climate justice and women's rights into climate finance.

**The fourth group repeated the economic and political barriers to gender and climate justice, but focused much more on the role of companies:**

- A main barrier is the growth in power of the (far)-right wing movement. This happens with a normalisation of anti-right narratives. They have their own traditional media and a very strong presence on social media; it is like a centralisation of power, in social media they have the algorithm on their side, which other actors need to compete to as an uphill battle, and they have very simple political messages.
- Private actors' interests (e.g. oil companies) and their lobbying are very powerful. These corporations are also present in the Global South where they play a big role in defining the policies of climate finance, reducing developments that are sustainable.
- Especially the following were issues mentioned:
  - Green Washing;
  - Some funds have a harmful impact;
  - US invests in anti-left campaigns in Latin America.

## 4.2 Feminist demands to European and national politicians regarding Gender and Climate Financing

The first group suggested the following key asks to feminists connected through transnational collaboration:

- We should involve men in the movement and analysis. This is needed to tackle toxic masculinity and to show how patriarchy is harmful for everyone.
- Financing should go to organizations that promote an intersectional approach.
- We should create mechanisms at the international level to make climate justice conventions binding and promote accountability

And key asks to EU and national politicians:

- Allocate a higher percentage of funds to feminist and women led organisations. This means a quota in funding, as well as for representation, participation to projects primarily focusing on gender and climate justice and funds for grassroots women's rights associations and their networks in particular.
- Increase women and marginalised participation in democratic making positions and policies.
- Establish accountability mechanisms including e.g. monitoring and follow up committees to ensure intersectional agenda, equality and equity, and all asks.
- Lowering language barriers so that all people can follow and be part of the policy debates in the climate finance agenda.

The second group reflected on the key asks to promote gender and climate justice through a (decolonial) feminist:

- We need debt cancellation and tax justice, noting that there is 1% of the population that produces more greenhouse gas pollution than half of the population, this pollution of the wealthy should be taxed.
- And we need more funding for reparation for the countries that were exploited (and colonised).
- Reframe political narratives and policies: stop re-colonization and question white supremacy.
- Stop harmful methods like current practices around extractivism and raise awareness on them.
- Reframe our crises as a global issue. We have problems also at the EU level, not only in the global south. The problems faced in the global south are relevant for those in the North as well.

The third group focused their key asks to EU and national politicians:

- We need more funding for (women's rights/feminist) NGOs.
- Compliance of governments and companies with international commitments on gender, climate and human rights.
- We need to challenge the narrative about there is "no money" for gender and climate justice, for example with the debt-flows that show how much ends up in countries in the Global North from the Global South.

- Integration of civil society mechanisms in government decisions, not forgetting monitoring processes. Their role should warrant an independent participation from government. The example of the Domestic Advisory Groups between the EU and partner countries in trade agreements was given. There are partner countries that arrange a participation which represents civil society in name but is in fact an indirect representation of government.
- A good practice is that ministries meet periodically with networks of civil society organisations to exchange information and insights on policies, like periodic consultations that are held in the Netherlands.
- Governments can promote the possibility of cooperation with other civil society groups.

The fourth group came with the following key asks to promote gender and climate justice:

- Enable and ensure that human rights, environmental and gender justice commitments are binding.
- Civil society should be protected with more spaces to engage, in particular: ensure representation through trade unions and movements.
- There should be a further reflection on which kind of civil society really promote gender and climate justice from a human rights perspective, as there are also groups framing themselves as feminist for example, but actually promoting anti-gender politics.
- We should educate boys and not only girls on how to finance the future towards more gender and climate justice.

Finally, they came up with the following strategies for feminist groups, which gave a good practical ending to the conference:

- Invest and increase communication (framing).
- reach out to popular contacts through networking, like celebrities.
- Activism networking.
- Advocacy for understanding the links between different forms of violence (to be proactive) relating to climate and gender justice.
- Attract no-woman persons to the feminist movements.

## Annex: BIOGRAPHIES

**Elena Georgiadi** joined GenderCC in 2022 and became its programme officer for the COPGendered project when GenderCC merged with LIFE e.V in 2024. She is currently part of the department for international projects in LIFE e.V and responsible for coordinating and preparing a lot of the COPgendered e-learning modules.

**Zahra Hdidou** works for ActionAid UK as a Senior Resilience and Climate Advisor. She has a BA in Geography and African Studies from SOAS/KCL and an MSc in African Development from the London School of Economics. She has worked previously in regional humanitarian response coordination and in rural and sustainable agricultural development in East Africa and Latin America, for a range of UN and non-governmental organisations and consulting firms.

**Gea Meijers** is General Coordinator at WIDE+. She has promoted feminism through WIDE+'s collective action since 2006. She previously worked for several international and national NGOs, promoting secularism and peace in the Netherlands, the UK and Belgium. She founded an international humanist youth network in 2002 that is currently existing as Young Humanists International. Within WIDE+ she has a special focus on feminist economic issues, including highlighting the interrelations between EU trade policy and economic gender discrimination, the discrimination faced by migrant women and digital discrimination.

**Daniela Pfeffer** is a professional in international development cooperation, with almost 20 years of experience, primarily working with NGOs. Her work has focused on coordinating diverse development programs, with a geographical focus on Africa, where she also lived and worked for seven years. Currently she is responsible for a global knowledge management programme at horizont3000 in Austria, paying particular attention to “sharing & learning for gender equality”, involving CSOs across 10 countries in Africa and Central America.

**Patricia Muñoz Cabrera** is a researcher and consultant on equality and intersectionality in international cooperation, with a PhD in Belgium, focussing on Postcolonial Studies, Comparative Literature & Cultural Studies and African American Feminist Studies. Her recent academic research focused on transformation processes triggered by feminist-driven governmental action/public policies in Chile. She has worked for several international NGOs and has been an active member of the European WIDE(+) network for many years. Currently, she works as an independent gender consultant, for institutions such as the Council of Europe. Recently, she was part of the evaluation team of the EU Gender Action Plan II for development cooperation.

**Paulina Novo** is a policy analyst and life-long international human rights activist who has spent decades championing environmental and economic justice and is currently a member of Women in Development Europe+. Her fields of expertise include financial flows, Food Sovereignty, trade, feminism and human and environmental rights. She is originally from Mexico but has worked around the globe on issues related to gender and indigenous rights, immigration, corporate and financial accountability. She has a bachelors in Economics and International Business from the Tecnológico de Monterrey in Guadalajara Mexico and MA in International Relations from the University of San Francisco, CA. She currently lives in the Netherlands.

**Janine Wurzer** is coordinator at WIDE Austria, where she works since 2016. Before that, she worked in Development Cooperation, nowadays her focus is rather on adult education. She worked as a freelance facilitator and consultant for the empowerment of women and girls, a gender and diversity trainer, and as an expert on sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and the prevention of gender-based violence and protection from abuse. For many years, Ms Wurzer was active in Austrian international cooperation projects. Along with colleagues from diaspora communities, she is engaged in feminist and anti-racist educational work. She has an academic background as a Romanist and cultural and social anthropologist.