

# WOMEN \* GENDER CONSTITUENCY

## WGC submission on the COP 30 Presidency Roadmap on the Transition Away from Fossil Fuels in a Just, Orderly and Equitable Manner

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The Women and Gender Constituency (WGC) welcomes the opportunity to input into the COP30 Presidency's initiative to elaborate a Roadmap on the Transition Away from Fossil Fuels in a Just, Orderly and Equitable Manner, and commends the commitment to an inclusive, participatory, and transparent process. The WGC stresses the need to accelerate mitigation efforts by embedding a feminist, fair, funded, equitable and just transition away from fossil fuels in the Roadmap, which should include the outcomes of the First International Conference on the Transition Away From Fossil Fuels, provided that these outcomes are in line with climate justice and meet the level of ambition required for a just phase-out. The WGC further calls for the Mitigation Work Program to be extended beyond 2026, with targets to urgently scale up mitigation ambition and a mandate informed by the Just Transition Work Program and the Global Stocktake, fully integrating the principles of Gender Just Climate Action.

The IPCC AR6 report stressed the need to peak emissions by 2025. Yet, UNFCCC closed 2025 with a dysfunctional Mitigation Work Program that is not delivering. 59% of NDCs were still missing, there was a gap of 29.9 GtCO<sub>2</sub>e to remain below 1.5 degrees C, and the GST commitment to transition away from fossil fuels and triple renewable energy has no clear follow up. The result, the year from June 2023 through May 2024, has been the highest on record at 1.63 degrees C above pre-industrial levels, threatening millions of lives and livelihoods, **enriching the already ultrarich, giving even more power to patriarchal and colonial structures.**

The climate crisis demands a shift away from all extractivist, colonial, racist, and patriarchal systems - interlocking barriers to a potential transition that could actually act as a transformative vehicle for racial, gender and economic justice. Any just and equitable transition requires systemic change that prioritizes the needs and experiences of fossil-fuel impacted people and communities: women and girls in all their diversity, youth, trade unions and care workers, Indigenous Peoples, Afrodescendants, people with disabilities, migrants and displaced people, and local communities. It must uphold social justice, feminist economies centered on care, collective human and labour rights, poverty eradication, and decent work.

This submission responds to the four questions posed by the COP30 Presidency, and is rooted in the WGC's understanding that a transition away from fossil fuels that does not center gender justice, racial justice, shifts away from systems of extraction and colonialism, and the rights of frontline and fossil-fuel-impacted communities is not just.

## **(a) Critical Barriers to the Transition Away from Fossil Fuels**

### **Prevailing Exploitative and Militarized Economic System**

Our **current fossil-fueled economic model** has led to extreme human rights, women's rights and Indigenous rights violations—it is clear that transforming this entrenched, extractive economic model is **the main barrier facing us** globally. This prevailing economic system is built on the exploitation of gendered and racialized labour, particularly of the unpaid and unrecognised care and domestic work led by migrants, women and gender-diverse people. It is built on an unequal transfer of value, including raw materials and of labor, from the Global South to the Global North, enriching and enabling an energy transition for the benefit of some to the detriment of many.

**The imperial violence of the Global North is one of the most significant barriers facing a transition away from fossil fuels, with the perpetuation of militarized domination to sustain fossil fuel dominance and access to critical minerals** severely degrading the environment and threatening communities. This fossil-fueled militarization demands accountability and alternative forms of international solidarity that values cooperation over competition, extraction and death.

### **Backsliding on Rights and Protections**

In parallel with the violence of war, racism, and xenophobia, growing geopolitical barriers reflect the increasing pushback against gender equality, women's and gender-nonconforming peoples' rights. The **rollbacks of hard-won rights** from leaders embracing "**petromasculinity**"—leadership characterized by fossil-fueled domination, patriarchy and imperialism—represents an extreme geopolitical barrier to democracy and civil society movements. These structural threats limit the ability of communities to exercise their human, social, political and economic rights and access health, housing, land, education, work, social security, food sovereignty, and political representation - all of which hinder their ability to adapt, transition, and live dignified lives. These entrenched political interests are preventing a phaseout of fossil fuels while fueling gender backlash. Petromasculinity, and the leaders who embrace it, will lead us only toward ego, oppression and ruin.

## **(b) Levers for Accelerating the Transition**

### **Divest from fossil-fueled extraction, invest in regenerative, feminist economies of care**

Feminist climate justice advocates have consistently highlighted that current systems commodify, profit from, invisibilise and marginalise life-sustaining care work. We have consistently advocated that care work must not act as the unpaid, undervalued and ignored scaffolding that allows present and future economies to operate. In any solution that moves us towards a gender-just transition, it is vital that the role of care work is examined at the outset as a foundational principle. If this does not happen, any transition away from a fossil fuel-based economy will recreate and entrench the same existing gender norms and inequalities. Globally, people perform 16.4 billion hours of unpaid care work a day, approximately 76% of which is carried out by women. The care economy is a low-carbon economy, and investment in care work can have social, environmental, and economic co-benefits, strengthening the infrastructure for vital universal social protections while often delivering more jobs than investment in other sectors.

Governments, particularly those in the Global North, are responsible for the critical reallocation of public resources away from fossil-fuel based and militarized sectors and towards stronger social protections and care-based sectors. This includes instituting stronger regulatory control and accountability mechanisms for private sector actors, both in their ongoing roles as well as reparative actions for past harms. Strong national and global policies that open up fiscal space towards social protections and remove barriers such as debt cancellation are key. Importantly, while government investment in the care sector is the first step, it must be paired with guardrails that prevent the further privatization and exploitation of care work, recreating systems of gendered labor inequality.

A phase out of fossil fuels that is accompanied by reconsideration and revaluation of the role of care work in our economy is a paramount solution for gender justice. Women, girls and gender non-conforming people tend to be primary caregivers, food producers, and energy managers at home, responsibilities that position them at the frontline of both care work and climate risk. Extreme weather and climate impacts increase the demand on care work, and without support, women are expected to fill in the gaps that government policies and social protections fail to. This constrains economic prospects, increases health hazards, and affects adequate standard of living. Public investments in the care sector—done with appropriate guardrails and protections for human rights and labor protections—help to value and compensate for work disproportionately done by women. An approach to fossil fuel phaseout, transitioning workers, creating green jobs or economic investments that does *not* include care work will fail to be gender-transformative.

### **Protect bodily autonomy, Indigenous sovereignty, human rights and an ethic of consent in the phaseout *and* just energy transition**

While we transition away from fossil fuels and towards renewable energy, we must also prevent exploitation and human rights abuses within renewable energy production and implementation. The exploitation of energy resources—whether fossil fuels or others—often takes place in Indigenous, peasant, Afrodescendant, and small-scale producer and fisherfolk territories. The territories of these communities are exploited, and the communities themselves are denied access to and enjoyment of the energy produced.

Feminist collectives have long encouraged investment in decentralized, democratized, community-centered energy solutions. By prioritizing deep and thoughtful processes of consultation and consent, including free, prior and informed consent (FPIC), communities can determine what energy solutions will actually work for them in their context. Rather than asking communities to conform to one-size-fits-all solutions driven by corporate interests, inclusive decision-making processes will ensure that benefits - in terms of finance, jobs, and energy access and affordability - reach all. Critically, a fossil fuel phaseout cannot open the door for false solutions, such as nuclear energy or geoengineering. Alternative models of energy ownership, such as cooperatives and other community-controlled and centered models, challenge the private sector's chokehold on our energy access and ensure stronger decision-making power from community leaders, including women.

National and local governments are responsible for the implementation of safeguards and regulatory practices that rein in private sector exploitation and control over mining practices, leading to violations of Indigenous sovereignty, gender-based violence, and threats and harms to environmental defenders. Vitally, this includes legal protections and enforcements for rights violations, including free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) across all industries. There is an urgent need for legally binding protections and regulatory mechanisms that uphold FPIC as a non-negotiable standard, within and across borders. Ensuring that affected communities receive information and shape natural resource governance and mining decisions in their own languages, and through inclusive, participatory processes, is essential. The gender-based violence and human rights violations associated with critical minerals mining have the potential to recreate the same unequal dynamics created by fossil fuels. An approach that prioritizes FPIC and the rights-based considerations around energy production, implementation, distribution, access, and use is paramount for addressing these inequities without reinforcing the same inequalities post phaseout.

### **Prioritize reparative justice for fossil-fuel impacted communities through international cooperation, not competition**

We are far past the point of understanding that competition will not catalyze a fair phaseout nor a just transition with human rights at the center. International cooperation amongst coalitions of the willing on key issues such as resource mobilisation, transition financing, capacity-building and transfer of technology are paramount. There must be ample coordinating space and mechanisms made available for practitioners, scientists, researchers, advocates and civil society

representatives, and government officials to share best practices, lessons learned and capacity-building strategies on phase outs and a just transition. While remaining accountable and complementary to the UNFCCC and any future JTWP mechanism, additional coordination spaces of participation for governments and civil society can advance sector or issue-specific areas of knowledge as well as regional and context-specific best practices.

Reparative justice must be central to a phaseout that does not leave fossil-fuel and mining-impacted communities behind, and instead prioritizes their needs and demands in the phaseout and subsequent stages of the transition. From a local to global level, particular communities - Indigenous peoples, racialized communities, low-income and poor communities- have been on the frontlines of fossil fuel siting, extraction, production, processing and distribution. In both lived testimony and research, this has been associated with devastating health impacts, including reproductive health impacts, increased gender-based, sexual violence, and trafficking and labor violations for those working in or near the industry. For communities impacted by the harms of fossil fuel production, processes of reparative justice should go hand in hand with a just phaseout that does not leave fossil fuel workers, care and informal workers, or the communities economically intertwined and impacted by them behind.

Plentiful tools for more fruitful and equitable international cooperation exist that challenge the multilateral political gridlock and unequal exchange of value from the Global South to the Global North. A fossil fuel phaseout and subsequent transition cannot lock countries or communities, particularly in the Global South, into even deeper traps of debt, loans, and exploitative partnerships that enrich governments and private actors in the Global North. From the transfer and sharing of intellectual property rights, technology transfer, and innovative forms of South-South cooperation, knowledge-exchange, and peer-learning spaces, genuine international cooperation must be pursued. Civil society has long advocated that the UNFCCC is an imperfect space for navigating the power dynamics between states and civil society, and that alternative spaces of consultation and co-creation are key. Important models already exist for social dialogue and community-driven decision-making around natural resource governance that put consultation and consent at the center. Spaces for meaningful co-creation and participation in fossil fuel phaseout, procedural and reparative justice and just transition policies and programming is a right, especially for impacted women and gender-diverse peoples, Indigenous peoples and other impacted communities.

### **Enable Equitable Access to Mitigation Technologies**

A just fossil fuel phaseout requires policies and financial support schemes that do not further reinforce patriarchal structures and swamp people and countries in debt, but ensure equitable and gender-responsive access to mitigation technologies that contribute to real solutions and not perpetuate false solutions, linking technology needs assessments directly with predictable finance and removing intellectual property barriers that limit women and local innovators from deploying clean solutions.

All mitigation technology projects must undergo gender and human rights responsive impact assessments and guarantee meaningful participation of women and marginalized communities throughout design, deployment, and monitoring, with transparent accountability and grievance mechanisms.

### **Integrate health, including sexual and reproductive health and rights, in the transition**

The climate crisis is a health crisis, and fossil fuels use and extraction have devastating consequences on health, including sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and gender-based violence (GBV), especially among racialized communities. From a local to global level, communities on the frontlines of fossil fuel siting, extraction, production, processing and distribution have, in both lived testimony and research, experienced devastating health impacts, including reproductive health impacts, increased gender-based and sexual violence, and trafficking and labor violations for those working in or near the industry. A just phaseout must therefore incorporate health – including SRHR – as a cross-cutting consideration in transition planning, recognizing that a co-benefit of mitigation and a just transition to renewables is improved health, reducing the disease burden catalyzed by air pollution, inter alia. All transition policies and programs must include health impact assessments with disaggregated data and the meaningful participation of affected communities, particularly women and gender-diverse people.

## **(c) Country, Regional and Sector Experiences, Best Practices, and Lessons Learned**

A just fossil fuel phaseout requires ample and resourced coordinating space and mechanisms made available for practitioners, scientists, researchers, advocates and civil society representatives, and government officials to share best practices, lessons learned and capacity-building strategies on phase outs and a just transition.

Feminists have long encouraged investment in decentralized, democratized, community-centered energy solutions. Alternative models of energy ownership, such as cooperatives and other community-controlled and centered models, challenge the private sector's chokehold on our energy access and ensure stronger decision-making power from community leaders, including women. There are already powerful and plentiful examples of community energy systems thriving at a local, community, and regional level, including in the [Gender Just Climate Solutions](#) uplifted by the Women and Gender Constituency. These models demonstrate that decentralized, community-controlled energy systems can address energy poverty while respecting Indigenous sovereignty and delivering genuine co-benefits for women and marginalized communities. Local participation, gender-transformative approaches, and social equity within energy communities development align with the principles of a Just Transition. When supported by enabling policies and practical tools, these communities can empower residents to take ownership of their energy

futures, reduce the number of women and girls in all their diversity who are exposed to energy vulnerable situations, and contribute to broader climate justice and feminist goals.

## **(d) Reflecting Diverse Realities: Just, Orderly and Equitable Differentiated Pathways**

The Roadmap must address a diverse set of country circumstances, recognizing that no single transition pathway applies to all countries and regions. Plentiful tools for more fruitful and equitable international cooperation exist that challenge the multilateral political gridlock and unequal exchange of value from the Global South to the Global North.

International cooperation on key issues such as resource mobilisation, transition financing, capacity-building and transfer of technology are paramount. From the transfer and sharing of intellectual property rights, technology transfer, and innovative forms of South-South cooperation, knowledge-exchange, and peer-learning spaces, genuine international cooperation must be pursued, and imposed so-called climate solutions must be avoided at all costs. Feminists demand that partnerships to guarantee the just energy transition of the global South be guided by and responsive to the needs and priorities of the global South partners. Crucially, feminists demand an end to debt-based financing for the energy transition of the global South, as such financing can never be labelled "just". Rather, the global North countries must address their historical responsibility for colonialism and climate change through reparations.

The Women and Gender Constituency encourages an intersectional and cross-sectoral approach that recognizes the interconnected nature of energy to all other sectors and aspects of Just Transition. We must not see energy through narrow understandings of only JET-Ps or investments in renewable energy, but rather through a whole systems change approach that centers the rights-based considerations of energy production, implementation, distribution, access, and use.

Finally, spaces for meaningful co-creation and participation in fossil fuel phaseout, procedural and reparative justice and just transition policies and programming is a right, especially for impacted women and gender-diverse peoples, Indigenous peoples and other impacted communities.

## **Conclusion and Calls to Action**

The WGC calls on the COP30 Presidency Roadmap to reflect the following demands:

- Ensure a feminist fossil fuel phaseout that places care work and care workers at the center, recognizing the role of the fossil fuel sector in maintaining patriarchal and colonial structures.

- Divest from military and fossil-fuel spending and redirect public resources towards climate action, social protections, and feminist just transitions.
- Implement COP28's agreement to triple renewables and double energy efficiency in a way that ensures women and gender-diverse people's rights, and favours decentralised, community-controlled energy for households, communities, and farmers.
- Adopt legally binding protections and regulatory mechanisms that uphold FPIC as a non-negotiable standard for all energy and critical minerals projects, within and across borders.
- End debt-based financing for the energy transition of the Global South and ensure that partnerships to finance the energy transition of the Global South are guided by and responsive to the needs and priorities of Global South partners. The Global North must address its historical responsibility for colonialism and climate change through reparations.
- Prioritize reparative justice for fossil-fuel-impacted communities - including Indigenous peoples, racialized communities, fossil fuel workers, care workers, and informal workers - ensuring they are not left behind in the phaseout and subsequent transition stages.
- Enable equitable and gender-responsive access to mitigation technologies, removing intellectual property barriers and linking technology needs assessments to predictable, grant-based finance.
- Integrate health - including sexual and reproductive health and rights - into all transition planning and mitigation agenda items.
- Include the outcomes of the First International Conference on the Transition Away From Fossil Fuels, provided that these outcomes are in line with climate justice and meet the level of ambition required for a fossil-fuel phase-out that is truly just.