CARE WORK AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Options for National Assessments under the Belém Gender Action Plan

This information note was prepared by an informal group of experts engaged in implementation of the UNFCCC's Gender Action Plan (GAP) with key inputs from the Climate and Care Initiative (CCI) alongside the Kaschak Institute for Social Justice for Women and Girls, the Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO) and other key stakeholders. It does not represent official guidance from the UNFCCC. Please contact claudia@wedo.org for more information.

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1. Why Care Matters for National Assessments under A.3.9

This technical note is intended to present options that may support Parties, relevant organizations, civil society, researchers, national gender and climate change focal points, and other stakeholders preparing submissions under Deliverable A.3.9 of the Belém Gender Action Plan (decision 7/CP.30). This deliverable invites submissions by March 2027 on the findings of national assessments of relevant issues, such as health, violence against women and girls, and care work in the context of gender and climate change.

"Because climate vulnerability is shaped not only by hazards but by inequity, marginalization, governance, and access to resources, national assessments should examine how care responsibilities shape people's capacity to prepare, respond, and recover." [1]

National assessments under Deliverable A.3.9 can help make visible how climate change affects care needs, care work, care workers, and care systems, as well as how care contributes to adaptation and resilience. They can also help assess how care responsibilities and access to care services shape vulnerability and adaptive capacity, and whether climate responses reduce or increase care-related inequalities. Understanding these interactions can help identify hidden vulnerabilities, assess differentiated impacts, and support more equitable, effective and gender-responsive climate policies.

2. Care Work and Climate Change

Climate change and care are interconnected in multiple ways. Climate change increases the need for care and the demand for care work through illness,

[1] Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. (2023). Climate change 2023: Synthesis report: Summary for policymakers. https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/resources/spm-headline-statements/

displacement, food insecurity, environmental degradation, and climate-related disasters. These additional demands are often absorbed through unpaid or underpaid care work, particularly by women and girls.[2]

Additionally, climate change makes care provision more difficult, time-consuming, and resource-intensive. As care systems become less reliable, households and communities are often required to fill the gaps.[3] [4]

Climate impacts and climate responses can deepen existing inequalities through care. When climate policies, adaptation measures, or recovery efforts fail to consider care needs and responsibilities, they may increase unpaid care burdens and transfer additional responsibilities to households and communities. Understanding these dynamics is critical for assessing whether climate policies reduce or perpetuate existing inequalities.[5] [6]

The connection goes both ways; care is not only affected by climate change; care systems are also essential to climate resilience and adaptation. Care workers, caregivers, community organizations, and care infrastructure help prepare for, respond to, and recover from climate-related shocks. Strengthening care systems can therefore contribute to climate resilience, adaptive capacity, and advance a truly just transition.

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[2] Climate and Care Initiative. (2024, November). Climate change and care: Policy brief. https://climateandcareinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Climate-Change-and-Care-Policy-Brief_Nov2024.pdf

[3] Climate and Care Initiative. (2024, November). Climate change and care: Policy brief. https://climateandcareinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Climate-Change-and-Care-Policy-Brief_Nov2024.pdf

[4] Climate and Care Initiative. (2025). Rethinking the connections between care and climate: a nexus approach https://climateandcareinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/Repensando-conexiones-cuidados-en.docx

[5] Climate and Care Initiative. (2024, November). Climate change and care: Policy brief. https://climateandcareinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Climate-Change-and-Care-Policy-Brief_Nov2024.pdf

[6] Climate and Care Initiative. (2025). Rethinking the connections between care and climate: a nexus approach https://climateandcareinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/Repensando-conexiones-cuidados-en.docx

3. What is care work?

Care work includes the paid and unpaid activities that sustain people, households, communities, and the environment. It includes:

> **Direct care**, such as caring for children, older persons, persons with disabilities, people who are ill, and people affected by climate-related disasters or displacement.

> **Indirect care**, such as cooking, cleaning, collecting water or fuel, growing or preparing food, managing household resources, maintaining safe shelter, and supporting sanitation and hygiene.

> **Community care**, such as mutual aid, disaster response, community health support, environmental stewardship, care for land and water, and support networks that sustain people during and after crises.

> **Paid care work**, including domestic work, childcare, elder care, health care, education, community health work, social work, and other forms of formal and informal care labor.

Far from being just a collection of isolated human tasks, care work is essential not only for sustaining and reproducing life, but also for the capacity of individuals, households, and communities to respond, adapt, and recover from climate-related shocks.

Care work is often invisible despite its significant contribution to economies and societies. The International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates that unpaid care work accounts for up to 39% of GDP in some countries and is performed predominantly by women, who sustain this critical pillar of the economy as they perform 76.2% of the world's unpaid care.[7] Care responsibilities also remain one of

[7] International Labour Organization. (2018, June 27). ILO: Women do 4 times more unpaid care work than men in Asia and the Pacific. https://www.ilo.org/resource/news/ilo-women-do-4-times-more-unpaid-care-work-men-asia-and-pacific

the main barriers to women's participation in paid employment;[8] as they dedicate over three times more hours per day to these tasks than men. Nearly 42% of women of working age remain sidelined from formal employment—contrasting sharply with a mere 6% of men—proving that caregiving responsibilities deeply dictate global economic and social dynamics.[9] These pre-existing inequalities in the distribution of care are important for understanding how climate impacts and climate responses may affect women and men differently.

4. Key Messages

The evidence included in this technical note, integrates the findings from the Climate and Care Initiative (CCI), presents messages that may help inform national assessments under Deliverable A.3.9 of the Belem Gender Action Plan. Collectively, these patterns demonstrate that care work is both affected by climate change and essential to climate resilience, adaptation and just transition. National assessments can use these messages to identify priority areas for data collection, analysis and policy action.

1 **Climate change increases the need for care and care work**

Climate-related shocks, environmental degradation, displacement, and climate-related illness increase both unpaid and paid care responsibilities, often placing additional demands on households, communities, and care workers, who are mostly composed of women and girls.[10] [11]

[8] International Labour Organization. (2018, June 27). ILO: Women do 4 times more unpaid care work than men in Asia and the Pacific. https://www.ilo.org/resource/news/ilo-women-do-4-times-more-unpaid-care-work-men-asia-and-pacific

[9] International Labour Organization. (2018, June 27). ILO: Women do 4 times more unpaid care work than men in Asia and the Pacific. https://www.ilo.org/resource/news/ilo-women-do-4-times-more-unpaid-care-work-men-asia-and-pacific

[10] Climate and Care Initiative. (2024, November). Climate change and care: Policy brief. https://climateandcareinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Climate-Change-and-Care-Policy-Brief_Nov2024.pdf

[11] Climate and Care Initiative. (2025). Rethinking the connections between care and climate: a nexus approach https://climateandcareinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/Repensando-conexiones-cuidados-en.docx

2 Climate change makes care provision more difficult and deepens existing gender and other inequalities

Climate change disrupts the resources, infrastructure, and services that make caregiving possible. In rural areas, droughts, floods, water scarcity, crop losses, and damage to health services, schools, roads, and energy systems increase the time and effort required to meet care needs. Because care responsibilities remain highly gendered, these impacts disproportionately affect women and girls, reinforcing existing gender, rural, and economic inequalities.

3 Climate policies can reduce care inequalities or deepen them

A just transition requires investment in climate-resilient care systems and care workers. Climate adaptation and mitigation measures and policy may unintentionally increase burden for care providers, and if not explicitly considered put additional pressure on care systems and women.

Climate finance has a crucial role in remunerating care work but is currently inadequate for the scale of care and human wellbeing it has the potential to support. Shifting investments towards care-centred climate action is necessary for care to be treated as critical climate infrastructure, supporting care jobs as green jobs while strengthening community resilience, social protection, and equitable adaptation pathways. This can reduce inequalities, avoid further indebtedness, and enable countries to invest in the social infrastructure needed for a just and regenerative transition.[12] [13] [14]

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[12] Phalatse, S., Taylor, J., & Valodia, I. (2025). The care-climate nexus: A conceptual framework. Southern Centre for Inequality Studies, University of the Witwatersrand. https://wiredspace.wits.ac.za/items/c03eb885-69e2-48e7-a59b-37486b0bc840

[13] Climate and Care Initiative. (2026, March 23). Centering care in climate finance: A feminist blueprint for adaptation, resilience, and climate justice.https://climateandcareinitiative.org/centering-care-in-climate-finance-en-es-pt/

[14] Robino, C., Nicolau, G., & Williams, M. (2025, November 25). Care is climate infrastructure: Report from COP30. Revaluing Care in the Global Economy. https://revaluingcare.org/care-is-climate-infrastructure-report-from-cop30/

4 **Care systems are essential infrastructure for adaptation, resilience, and a just transition**

Care workers, caregivers, community organizations, and care systems help individuals and communities prepare for, respond to, and recover from climate impacts. Strengthening care systems is therefore part of strengthening climate resilience. Consequently, a just transition requires recognizing, reducing, redistributing, rewarding, and representing care work, caregivers, and care infrastructure.[15] Including care workers and caregivers, especially those from the Global South, is indispensable for transforming climate governance.

5. Key Findings and Evidence to Consider

The following findings and emerging evidence is presented based upon the climate-care nexus research conducted by the Climate and Care Initiative (CCI) in Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa and structured following the key messages presented in the previous section.

The Evidence identified across the two regions, highlights several recurring patterns at the intersection of care work, gender and climate change.[16] [17] Together,

[15] Grantham, K., & Somji, A. (2022, June). A toolkit on paid and unpaid care work: From 3Rs to 5Rs. UN Women. https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-06/A-toolkit-on-paid-and-unpaid-care-work-en.pdf

[16] In the case of Latin America, the findings are based on participatory-action fieldwork and collaborative research conducted by Universidad Nacional de San Martin (UNSAM) between August 2025 and May 2026. The research was conducted alongside eleven community-based organizations and based on their experiences across six Latin American countries: Argentina, Mexico, Brazil, Ecuador, Peru, and Colombia. This fieldwork produced a qualitative corpus of data: a set of in-depth interviews (with women leaders and inhabitants, as well as public functionaries, specialists and NGO members), observation notes (gathered in the affected territories and community activities in which we participated) and other secondary sources (such as documents produced by the organizations and the affected population). For more information and analysis, see: Nejamkis, L., & Gavazzo, N. (2026). Clima y cuidados en América Latina: un análisis situado y colaborativo de experiencias comunitarias para la sostenibilidad de la vida en los territorios. Documentos de Investigación, Escuela Interdisciplinaria de Altos Estudios Sociales, Universidad Nacional de San Martín. https://unsam.edu.ar/escuelas/eidaes/docs/doc3_2026.pdf

[17] In the case of Sub-Saharan Africa, the findings are based on participatory-action fieldwork and collaborative research conducted by the University of Witwatersrand Johannesburg (Wits) between December 2025 and August 2026. The research was conducted alongside twelve community-based organizations and based on their experiences across seven African countries: Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Ghana, Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda, Zimbabwe. This fieldwork produced a qualitative corpus of data, including in-depth interviews, observation notes and secondary sources. *The Care-Climate Nexus in Africa – A Multi-Case Study report [Working Draft] (Not published yet)*

these findings demonstrate how care and climate are deeply interconnected, and why care must be considered a core component of a just transition. They may be used as examples on how to approach national assessments under deliverable A.3.9 by identifying priority issues for data collection, analysis and policy development. The information includes possible assessment questions and examples of data that could be useful for national assessments.

1 Climate change increases the need for care and care work.

Climate change increases both unpaid and paid care work. The research in both Latin America and Africa shows that diverse climate impacts are generating more burden for care work, increasing the work required to access water and food, caring for climate-related illness (both physical and mental), among other impacts. Climate shocks and slow onset events can increase both the number of people requiring care and the time and intensity of care work.

Research by TinT FollowTaxes (Nigeria) found that care responsibilities increase significantly during climate shocks. During floods and droughts, 68.6% of women in Kaduna and 47.5% in Taraba State stopped paid work because of increased caregiving responsibilities. In Peru, Socios en Salud works with community health workers in Ventanilla. Their experiences showed that water and heat stress increase the work involved in obtaining and managing water, as well as in preventing health risks and providing care. This work, carried out primarily by women, not only increases but remains insufficiently recognized and compensated.

For national assessments, this suggests a need to examine not only whether climate impacts increase care needs, but also who absorbs the additional demand for care, across households, communities, and formal care systems, and between paid and unpaid care workers.

Assessment questions:

- How do climate shocks affect unpaid and community care work?
- How do climate impacts affect the workload and working conditions of paid care workers?
- How do climate-related health impacts increase care needs?
- Who absorbs additional care responsibilities when care needs increase?

National assessments may examine:

- How climate impacts are increasing hours of unpaid care work.
- Labour force participation of caregivers.
- Care workforce shortages and workloads.
- Access to water, food and essential household services.
- The potential for care jobs, which are low GHG-emitting jobs, to be recognised as green jobs.

2 Climate change makes care provision more difficult and deepens existing gender inequalities.

Research in both regions is showing that climate change impacts are affecting care systems as a whole, putting pressure on the physical infrastructure that allows for care provision, the capacity of paid and unpaid careworkers and institutions to deliver care, and family and community systems. Research by Public Services International in Ghana has shown that extreme heat and flooding has impacted the ability of healthcare workers to adequately provide healthcare. This has contributed to fatigue, dehydration, reduced concentration, and burnout among health workers, while flooding disrupts medical records, medicines, and daily operations.[18] It illustrates how climate change

[18] Public Service International. Climate and Care Initiative. (2024, November). Organising Health Workers' Voices for Climate-Resilient Care in Ghana. https://avina.sharepoint.com/sites/IDRC-Cuidadosyclima/Documentos%20compartidos/Forms/AllItems.aspx?id=%2Fsites%2FIDRC%2DCuidadosyclima%2FDocumentos%20compartidos%2FGeneral%2F8%2E%20Monitoreo%20y%20evaluaci%C3%B3n%2FFinal%20reports%2FPSI%20%2D%20Public%20Services%20International%5FGhana%2FPolicy%20Brief%20%5F%20Health%20%26%20Climate%20Ghana%2Epdf&parent=%2Fsites%2FIDRC%2DCuidadosyclima%2FDocumentos%20compartidos%2FGeneral%2F8%2E%20Monitoreo%20y%20evaluaci%C3%B3n%2FFinal%20reports%2FPSI%20%2D%20Public%20Services%20International%5FGhana&p=true&ct=1784202686124&or=EXCEL%2DWEB%2EBODY%2ENT&ga=1

burdens the workplace affecting care workers, care systems, and the quality and continuity of care itself.

These impacts can also disrupt the infrastructure and essential services on which care depends, including health facilities, schools and childcare services, water and sanitation, energy, and transport. For national assessments, this means examining both the climate exposure of care workers and the resilience and continuity of care services and care-supporting infrastructure.

Assessment questions:

- Are care services disrupted during climate events? Is the frequency increasing?
- How are paid care workers and care systems affected by climate hazards?
- Which elements of care-supporting infrastructure are most vulnerable?
- Are community systems being disrupted by climate hazards?

National assessments may examine:

- Service interruptions during climate events.
- Retrofitting essential infrastructure like hospitals and daycare centres and schools from heatwaves and flooding.
- Health facilities, clinics, community centers and school closures.
- Occupational impacts on care workers, including exposure to extreme heat and other climate-related hazards.
- Access to water, energy, transport, and essential care services.
- Continuity of care services during and after climate shocks.

3 Climate policies can reduce care inequalities or deepen them.

Climate finance has a crucial role in remunerating care work in mitigation, adaptation and loss and damages. The current levels of climate finance, particularly in adaptation and loss and damages, are inadequate for the

scale of care and human wellbeing it has the potential to support. Care-centred climate finance would support more systemic responses to climate change that can support mitigation and adaptation holistically. In addition, current climate finance is largely focused on mitigation and comes in the form of loans. This has meant less support for adaptation and loss and damage, which are critical for supporting care work. Further indebtedness of countries vulnerable to climate change only increases inequality and reduces climate resilience and the ability to invest in social infrastructure that is necessary for the redistribution of care. Research conducted in both Africa and Latin America shows that climate impacts are not experienced equally and that care remains largely absent from climate policies and responses. Women and girls disproportionately absorb the additional responsibilities that arise during climate shocks, while often being expected to lead adaptation and resilience efforts within their communities. Although care responsibilities vary depending on the type of climate impact, the local context, and whether a community is rural or urban, significant effects are evident across all settings. In the rural community of Mariscal Sucre, Ecuador, drought and limited access to water directly affect food production and local livelihoods. As a result, women face an increased unpaid care burden, having to dedicate more time, particularly in securing water, food, and household well-being, and exposing them to risks including GBV.[19] Yet these responsibilities remain largely overlooked in climate action efforts addressing water scarcity and territorial management. In the peri-urban communities where Mujer y Medio Ambiente works in Mexico, care burdens are shaped by a combination of social and environmental transitions, as well as inadequate basic services on the urban periphery. While in Mariscal Sucre the impacts are closely linked to

[19] Nejamkis, L., & Gavazzo, N. (2026). Clima y cuidados en América Latina: un análisis situado y colaborativo de experiencias comunitarias para la sostenibilidad de la vida en los territorios. Documentos de Investigación, Escuela Interdisciplinaria de Altos Estudios Sociales, Universidad Nacional de San Martín. https://unsam.edu.ar/escuelas/eidaes/docs/doc3_2026.pdf

land, water availability, and agricultural production, in the Mexican context they are associated with urban inequalities, limited access to services, and the day-to-day sustainability of households. Despite these differences there is a common pattern: women compensate for environmental and infrastructural shortcomings through increased unpaid care work stepping into the forefront of climate action, without this being considered in climate policies.[20]

These inequalities may also be reinforced by climate responses themselves. Adaptation, mitigation, recovery, or other climate measures that do not account for care needs and responsibilities may shift additional time, costs, and responsibilities onto households and communities. National assessments can therefore examine both the distributional impacts of climate change and the care impacts of climate policies and measures.

Assessment questions:

- Who assumes additional care responsibilities during climate shocks?
- Which groups face overlapping climate and care vulnerabilities?
- How do climate impacts affect women's economic participation?
- Is care being considered in climate measures and policies?
- Do caregivers participate in climate policy/governance?
- How do climate policies and adaptation measures affect the amount and distribution of unpaid care work and care-related inequalities?
- How do climate-care impacts differ across rural, urban, and peri-urban contexts?

[20] Phalatse, S., Taylor, J., & Valodia, I. (2025). The care-climate nexus: A conceptual framework. Southern Centre for Inequality Studies, University of the Witwatersrand. https://wiredspace.wits.ac.za/items/c03eb885-69e2-48e7-a59b-37486b0bc840

National assessments may examine:

- Distribution of unpaid care work and care responsibilities by sex and age.
- Time-use care burden by sex.
- Climate vulnerability by income.
- Disability and care indicators.
- Rural/urban and peri-urban gaps.
- The distribution of climate finance to go into investing in care.
- Gender impact assessments of climate policies.
- Time poverty, income loss, education and health outcomes associated with care responsibilities.
- Impacts disaggregated, as appropriate to national context, by disability, income, ethnicity, race, migration status, geography, and employment status.
- Distributional or care-impact assessments of climate policies and adaptation measures.

4 Care systems are essential infrastructure for adaptation, resilience, and just transition.

Across the Global South, communities contribute substantial time, labour, knowledge, and organizational capacity to activities such as agroecology, seed conservation, recycling, childcare, community health, disaster preparedness and food sovereignty. Yet these contributions are rarely recognized as part of climate action and resilience-building efforts. In Argentina, El Amanecer de los Cartoneros integrates recycling activities with childcare and children's health monitoring in the Matanza-Riachuelo Basin. The care infrastructure developed by this recyclers' association enables women and families to carry out essential climate and environmental services for the city while simultaneously reducing care burdens within their communities. Similarly, in Durban, South Africa

informal workers, the majority of whom are women, face growing risks from extreme heat and flooding while remaining largely excluded from formal care and social protection systems. Through its Change Agent Programme, Asiye eTafuleni has fostered a community-based care system that strengthens resilience among informal workers through disaster preparedness, waste management, occupational health and safety, climate and health initiatives, and childcare support. The research conducted in Africa[21] and Latin America[22] provides numerous examples of communities functioning as critical infrastructure for climate resilience by combining care, environmental stewardship, and livelihood strategies. In Ecuador, Colombia, Mexico, Uganda, Côte d'Ivoire, and Nigeria, locally led solutions have been shown to support climate-resilient agriculture, address climate impacts, strengthen food security, and reduce care burdens. These examples demonstrate that caregivers and community care systems already perform essential adaptation functions, often without recognition, remuneration, or institutional support. Taken together, they suggest that care systems should be understood not only as social infrastructure, but also as a fundamental component of local adaptive capacity and climate resilience.

Taken together, these experiences show how care services, workers, community networks, knowledge, and organization can contribute to adaptive capacity and resilience. They also demonstrate the importance of understanding the territorial and collective dimensions of care and of recognizing the knowledge and practices developed by grassroots and community organizations.

[21] The Care-Climate Nexus in Africa – A Multi-Case Study report [Working Draft] (Not published yet)

[22] Nejamkis, L., & Gavazzo, N. (2026). Clima y cuidados en América Latina: un análisis situado y colaborativo de experiencias comunitarias para la sostenibilidad de la vida en los territorios. Documentos de Investigación, Escuela Interdisciplinaria de Altos Estudios Sociales, Universidad Nacional de San Martín. https://unsam.edu.ar/escuelas/eidaes/docs/doc3_2026.pdf

However, community and territorial responses should not be interpreted as substitutes for adequately financed public care systems, nor should adaptation rely on women's unpaid or underpaid care work. Evidence from across the CCI suggests that many community-based initiatives linking care and climate resilience rely on short-term project funding, philanthropy, or international cooperation, revealing a persistent gap between the contribution communities make to adaptation and resilience and the resources available to sustain this work.

For national assessments, the relevant question is therefore not only how care contributes to adaptation and resilience, but whether care systems, workers, services, infrastructure, and community-based initiatives are adequately supported and financed, and whether climate action reduces rather than reproduces unequal care responsibilities.

Assessment questions:

- How do care systems contribute to adaptation and resilience?
- Which community-led care initiatives support climate resilience?
- How are care workers and community caregivers supported?
- Are community and territorial care initiatives connected to and supported by public care systems and social protection?
- Are public and climate-finance resources reaching care systems, care workers, and locally led initiatives?
- Do adaptation and resilience strategies reduce and redistribute care responsibilities, or depend on unpaid and underpaid care work?

National assessments may examine:

- Community care infrastructure and networks.
- Access to emergency services and availability of local care services.
- Community-based adaptation initiatives.
- Continuity of care services after climate events.

- Participation in community care initiatives.
- Public expenditure on climate-resilient care systems, services, infrastructure, and workforce.
- Climate-finance allocations that support care-related adaptation and resilience.
- Availability, duration, predictability, and accessibility of funding for locally led initiatives.
- Social protection and decent-work conditions for paid and community care workers.

6. Policy Directions

The evidence reviewed suggests that care should be considered a core dimension of climate resilience, adaptation, and just transition. The following policy directions may help Parties integrate care into climate assessments, planning processes, financing mechanisms, and implementation frameworks under the Belém Gender Action Plan.

1. **Integrate care into climate policy and planning:** Care work and care systems should be reflected across NDCs, NAPs, long-term strategies, disaster risk reduction plans, health adaptation plans, loss and damage frameworks, just transition plans, and climate finance proposals.[23] [24] Climate planning, budgeting, monitoring, and finance mechanisms should assess and address impacts on caregivers, care workers, unpaid care work, and access to care, ensuring that care is recognized as a core component of climate resilience, adaptation, and equitable development.

[23] Climate and Care Initiative. (2026, March 23). Centering care in climate finance: A feminist blueprint for adaptation, resilience, and climate justice.https://climateandcareinitiative.org/centering-care-in-climate-finance-en-es-pt/

[24] Grown, C., De Henau, J., Martinez, L., & Ilkkaracan, I. (2025, October 27). Integrating care and climate adaptation into a holistic fiscal framework at the country level. Brookings Institution. https://www.brookings.edu/articles/integrating-care-and-climate-adaptation-into-a-holistic-fiscal-framework-at-the-country-level/

2 **Climate finance should invest in climate-resilient care systems, services and social infrastructure:** Parties should expand and strengthen the systems that enable care, including childcare, elder care, disability support, health services, schools, shelters, water, sanitation, clean energy, transport, food systems, safe housing, and social protection. Investments should prioritize climate-vulnerable communities and ensure services remain accessible during and after climate-related shocks. Additionally, diverse climate finance and funding should not only acknowledge care but start including care systems as part of their finance structure.[25]

3 **Reduce care inequalities and redistribute unpaid care work:** Climate policies should reduce time poverty and address the unequal distribution of unpaid labor. They should also support a fairer sharing of care responsibilities between women and men, across generations, and among households, governments, communities and other institutions. Climate responses should support structural changes that recognize care as a collective responsibility and enable more equitable participation in economic, social and civic life.

4 **Climate policies must support participation and strengthen the care workforce as part of a just transition:** Care workers should be recognized as part of the climate resilience workforce. Just transition strategies should include investment in decent care jobs, including childcare, elder care, disability support, health care, education, and community care, alongside investments in renewable energy, transport, housing, and ecosystem restoration. This includes fair wages, safe working conditions, social protection, training, legal recognition, and

[25] Climate and Care Initiative. (2026). Centring care in climate finance: A feminist blueprint for adaptation, resilience, and climate justice [Working paper]. https://climateandcareinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/ENG-Care-Working-Paper-V2-US.pdf

collective bargaining rights. Care jobs, including health, childcare, elder care, community health, and social care services, contribute directly to adaptive capacity and resilience and should be recognized as part of just transition and climate-resilient employment strategies. Care jobs should be considered within the framework of green employment, given their contribution to climate resilience and their low-emission footprint.

5 **Prevent maladaptation through participation and accountability:** Parties should assess whether climate policies and projects increase unpaid care burdens, exclude caregivers, or deepen inequality. Caregivers, care workers, women's rights organizations, Indigenous Peoples, disabled persons' organizations, youth, and frontline communities should have accessible, resourced, and meaningful roles in shaping, monitoring, and evaluating climate decisions. Accountability mechanisms should ensure that climate action contributes to greater equity and does not shift additional burdens onto already marginalized groups.

6 **Support locally led and community-based care solutions:** Support locally led and community-based care solutions: Climate adaptation and resilience efforts should recognize and finance community-led care initiatives, including those led by women, Indigenous Peoples, youth, and grassroots organizations. Funding mechanisms should be accessible to local actors and support locally determined approaches that strengthen both care and climate resilience.

7 **Establish and institutionalize integrated climate and care information systems** that systematically generate, collect, analyze, and publish sex-disaggregated, age-disaggregated, disability-inclusive, and care-sensitive

data to assess how climate change affects caregiving responsibilities, care workers, and access to care services. These systems should combine quantitative and qualitative evidence and be embedded within national statistical offices, climate institutions, and care policy frameworks.

Such systems should include:

- **Regular time-use surveys** that measure unpaid care, domestic work, and community care, with data disaggregated by sex, age, ethnicity, disability status, income level, and geographic location.
- **Labor force statistics on paid care workers**, including wages, employment status, informality, migration status, working conditions, occupational health risks, access to social protection, and exposure to climate hazards.
- **Climate vulnerability and risk data** linked to care needs, including information on heatwaves, floods, droughts, storms, food and water insecurity, displacement, and their impacts on households and communities.
- **Monitoring systems for essential care-supporting infrastructure and services**, including schools, health facilities, childcare centers, elder care services, disability support services, water and sanitation systems, energy access, transportation, and social protection programs.
- **Public expenditure and climate finance tracking mechanisms** that identify and quantify investments in care-related infrastructure, services, and workforce development within climate adaptation, mitigation, and resilience programs.
- **Participatory knowledge-generation processes** that incorporate testimonies, case studies, community mapping, and assessments conducted with caregivers, care workers, women's rights organizations, Indigenous Peoples, persons with disabilities, youth organizations, and other affected communities.

To ensure policy relevance and accountability, governments should require that climate plans, adaptation strategies, just transition frameworks, and nationally determined contributions (NDCs) include indicators on care and regularly report progress through publicly accessible platforms.

By generating robust and comprehensive evidence on the climate-care nexus, governments can design policies that better target resources, reduce inequalities, strengthen care systems, improve climate resilience, and advance a just transition that recognizes and supports the work of sustaining life.

7. Conclusion

Care work is not peripheral to climate action. Evidence from across Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa shows that climate change increases care needs, places additional burdens on caregivers, affects care workers, and disrupts the systems and services that sustain everyday life. It is one of the main ways societies absorb, respond to, and recover from climate impacts. If care remains invisible, climate policy will continue to underestimate loss and damage, overlook essential adaptation needs, and shift the costs of crisis onto women, girls, and marginalized communities. Integrating care into climate assessments, planning, finance, and implementation can help reduce inequalities, strengthen adaptive capacity and resilience, and advance a just transition.

ANNEX

Key Resources to Consult

Nejamkis, L., & Gavazzo, N. (2026). Clima y cuidados en América Latina: un análisis situado y colaborativo de experiencias comunitarias para la sostenibilidad de la vida en los territorios. Documentos de Investigación, Escuela Interdisciplinaria de Altos Estudios Sociales, Universidad Nacional de San Martín. https://unsam.edu.ar/escuelas/eidaes/docs/doc3_2026.pdf

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