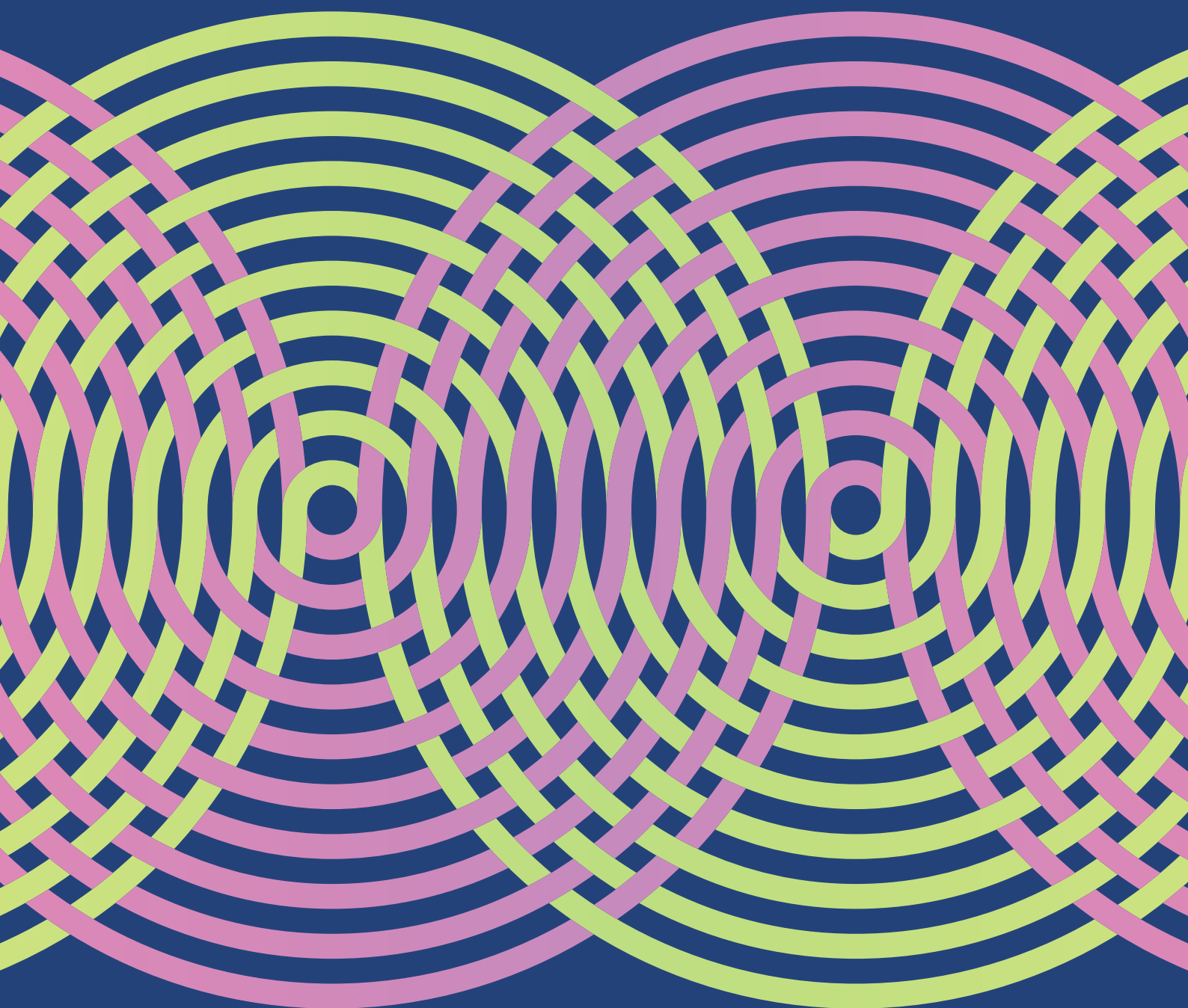


PROJECT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Feminist Partnerships to Strengthen the Agenda for Gender Equality



In partnership with
Canada



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About our project

In March 2017, the CIM Principal Delegates requested concrete guidelines to promote and defend gender equality as a human right, identifying a need for evidence-based arguments that highlight the social, cultural, economic, political, civic, environmental, and other benefits of gender equality. The Delegates' request led to the development of the [Inter-American Guidelines on Gender Equality for the Good of Humanity](#), which prioritize three strategic axes: (i) establishing relationships and partnerships; (ii) knowing and producing; and (iii) informing, sharing, and training.

In June 2021 the Executive Committee of the CIM 2019-2022 encouraged the Commission to enrich its consultation and coordination with feminist organizations in the region and requested a specific strategy to strengthen gender mainstreaming efforts and processes.

This project, which is supported by the Government of Canada, aims to respond to these different requests and strengthen alliances around the achievement of gender equality.

Project period: April 2023-March 2028



Why: The context

Beginning in late 2020, the CIM has conducted meetings and dialogues with a group of over 500 women's rights organizations (WROs) from the region. During these dialogues, participating organizations repeatedly expressed concern about the rise of anti-rights movements and discourses, including a notable "shrinking" of spaces for feminist advocacy, violence against women human rights defenders, and an alarming backward trend in women's rights in some countries as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, specific legal measures that limit rights, or the failure to effectively implement existing guarantees and standards. Many of the organizations also highlighted the value of regional and international spaces for advocacy, which carry authority and legitimacy that has been lost to WROs in many countries.

Over the past five years, the rise of backlash movements and discourses around progress on gender equality and women's rights has had a significant impact on the political agendas of the countries of the region. These movements have achieved significant incidence in multilateral spaces, including the OAS, where they have managed to block and even roll back consensus in terms of language around the progressiveness, universality, and interdependence of human rights. This hostility also extends to feminist leaders, voices and movements that speak out, both in the streets and within institutions, and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (2017) has noted an alarming rise in violence against women human rights defenders.

All of this has highlighted a need to strengthen the coordination, alliances and articulation of organizations and movements that defend and promote gender equality as a human right, including the multilateral and civil society organizations and State entities such as National Machineryes for Women.

Our response:

This project aims to enhance gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls of the hemisphere, in their diversity, by promoting and strengthening collaboration between key actors involved in critical advocacy for women's rights and the gender equality agenda. The project will focus on strengthening relationships and partnerships among stakeholders and using the synergies created to produce and build the capacity of these multistakeholder partnerships to promote gender equality as a human right in local, national, regional and international spaces.

Through cooperation led by the CIM and strategically sustained by the partners involved, the project will aim to bolster gender equality by sharing expertise, reinforcing mutual responsibility, coordinating strategies, creating synergies, and avoiding duplication of efforts.

The Theory of Change proposed in this project is based on action around the three strategic axes of the Inter-American Guidelines on Gender Equality as a Good of Humanity: (i) establishing relationships and partnerships; (ii) knowing and producing; and (iii) informing, sharing, and training.

It rests on the assumption that increasing dialogue and coordination between key groups of stakeholders and strengthening evidence-based advocacy for gender equality as a human right, and gender mainstreaming as an effective strategy for meeting this goal, will increase the impact of stakeholders' efforts to support the agenda for gender equality in the region. To maximize the impact of the project and to respond to the area with the greatest identified need, the project will focus the bulk of its activities and interventions on Central America.

As such, this project has two objectives:

- 1.** Build the capacity of feminist leaders and women's rights organizations to respond to the backlash against gender equality, and
- 2.** Support mainstreaming of gender equality across government and policy at the national level.



Stakeholders involved:

- **OAS Member States**, particularly the National Machineries for the Advancement of Women (NMAW), Ministries for Foreign Affairs, and other government sectors as relevant;
- **Civil society organizations**, specifically women's rights organizations (WROs);
- **Academic institutions**, universities, research centers and think tanks, specifically those with a focus on researching and developing data and evidence on gender equality and women's rights issues; and
- **Regional and international organizations** with a significant presence in the Americas region.

Project stakeholders will have the chance to participate as both beneficiaries and key allies in dialogue, articulation and advocacy processes, training, participatory and applied research, knowledge transfer, and/or exchange of experiences. These stakeholders will also seek to attract the support of potentially allied social and faith-based organizations, as well as philanthropic institutions to develop an agenda driven by the lived experiences of women and the production of concrete evidence on gender equality as a human right.

What we are going to do:

- Creation of a CIM advisory group with WROs.
- Capacity-building programs and training-of-trainers for WROs.
- Dialogues between NMAW and WROs.
- Communities of practice among NMAW and WROs.
- Participatory Gender Assessments and technical assistance to NMAW and Ministries for Foreign Affairs for the implementation of gender mainstreaming policies.
- Studies and analysis on regional trends and challenges for gender equality, including recommendations.
- Communication campaigns and collective advocacy strategies with calls to action.
- Dialogue with Permanent Missions to the OAS and Ministries for Foreign Affairs to support their advocacy around women's rights and equality as premises for strengthening democracy and development in the region.
- Advocacy strategies in the process towards the X Summit of the Americas and strengthening the gender perspective.

Theory of Change

Inputs:

- Women's organizations contribute the lived experience of women and their agendas.
- Academic and research centers generate evidence and transfer knowledge.
- International organizations advocate for gender equality agenda.
- Feminist leaders as champions and supporters advocating for gender equality.

Key strategic areas:

building capacity



knowledge generation

collective advocacy strategy



Impact

Greater social acceptance of gender equality as a development goal

Outcomes:

Short term:

- Strengthened the ability of feminist leaders and organizations to collectively mobilize gender equality strategies.
- Increased capacity of States to implement gender equality commitments.

Long-term:

- Advocates are better able to work together promoting gender equality.
- Decision-makers more engaged to promote and implement gender equality public policies.



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