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Office of Foreign Affairs



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TAKE BRASILIA TO THE WORLD AND BRING THE WORLD TO BRASILIA



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EDITORIAL



The Second Edition of the Distrito Internacional Magazine was devised under the umbrella of the month of March — a milestone for the fight over women’s rights — to foster the debate on mainstreaming gender issues in the international sphere. This initiative also falls under the 25th anniversary of the United Nations Economic and Social Council’s decision to decentralize the gender perspective in its entire system. Since then, we understand there has been improvement on the issue when it comes to international projects and actions promoted globally, but the need to solve gaps on the assurance and promotion of gender equality is still urgent.

In an interview, Ambassador Jennifer May shares the Canadian experience and its commitment to gender issues. She clarifies how the country has positioned itself as one of the biggest contributors for the mainstreaming of gender topics in its policies, mainly on what concerns its foreign policies and international cooperation initiatives for promoting gender equality in developing countries.

Ambassador Abena Busia, in her notes on Ghanaian women in diplomacy, illustrates the progress of women’s integration into the diplomatic career and reports on some of the challenges faced. In addition, she describes how women have reached the top of their careers both in diplomacy and in their service in international organisations.

Thereafter, the Representative of UN Women in Brazil, Anastasia Divinskaya, shares the agency’s work in Brazil and all around the world toward promoting women’s human rights and the shared effort between governments and civil society to turn the visibility of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) a reality for all women and girls. She also describes the advances and challenges after 25 years of Agreed Conclusions over the integration of gender perspectives at the United Nations’ policies and programs.

We invited the Director of the Cultural and Educational Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Brazil (MRE), Ambassador Paula de Souza; the Ambassador of Canada in Brazil, Mrs. Jennifer May; Charge d'Affaires, Minister Anders Wollter, representing the Royal Embassy of Sweden in Brazil; and the Representative of UN Women, Mrs. Anastasia Divinskaya, to share their experiences and perspectives about this mainstreaming movement.

Ambassador Paula de Souza takes us through parts of her professional journey and her work as head of the Cultural and Educational Department of MRE — which has been working tirelessly to present the Brazilian culture abroad, especially on the 200 bicentennial of Brazil's Independence, to be celebrated this year.

Lastly, the Chargé d'Affaires of the Embassy of Sweden in Brazil, Mr. Anders Wollter, presents the Swedish Feminist Foreign Policy, a fact that reassures the country's protagonism on promoting a global feminist agenda. He also describes the Swedish experience as the first country in the world to create and implement a foreign policy under these terms, and talks about how mainstreaming gender matters can be a handy tool not only for women and girls, but society as a whole.

The Magazine also brings a framework by the Office of Foreign Affairs around the role of international cities networks on gender issues alongside its member cities, encouraging the fulfillment of SDG 5: Achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls.

In this edition, we aim to present different perspectives regarding an issue that surrounds our daily lives while incentivizing the debate about possible approaches related to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in all aspects of life and politics, both locally and internationally.

Enjoy the reading!

Renata Zuquim
Head of the Office of Foreign Affairs
Government of the Federal District

INTERVIEW WITH AMBASSADOR JENNIFER MAY

Ambassador of Canada in Brazil



Visit of Ambassador Jennifer May to Roraima, in 2019, accompanying projects financed by Canada for the reception of Venezuelan refugees, in partnership with Operação Acolhida.

The government of Canada has positioned itself worldwide as a great defender of gender equality – which is even visible in the fact that it has a woman, the Honorable Minister Mélanie Joly, in charge of the country's foreign affairs. In addition, it institutionalized a Feminist Foreign Policy which, as one of its actions, supports more than 30 projects worldwide. What are the main points of this policy and what were its biggest challenges since its implementation?

We are incredibly proud to have so many experienced, capable and committed women at the forefront of Canadian politics, including our Minister of Foreign Affairs Mélanie Joly and our Minister of International Trade Mary Ng. Not to mention our Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Chrystia Freeland.

Canada is committed to a foreign policy approach that is officially feminist. Our international development policy is also feminist. But what does this actually mean? Basically, it means our

policies have one overarching goal: to enable women and girls to have equal rights and opportunities. We are convinced that putting women at the center of our international cooperation is the most effective way to reduce poverty and build a more inclusive, peaceful and prosperous world.

Working toward this goal, we aim to have 95% of Canadian bilateral assistance for international development supporting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, for more than 30 programs across the world. One of the challenges in having a global reach is making sure that each program is tailored specifically to the needs and context of the country. This is where our gender-based analysis plays an important role, as does working closely with local governments and civil society.

For example, here in Brazil, all the projects supported by the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives - a program that supports small-scale, high impact civil society initiatives – strive to include an approach that understands women as protagonists, either in the design of the project or as beneficiaries. In the last 10 years, almost one-third of all projects supported by the Canada Fund have exclusively addressed the themes of gender equality, empowerment of women and girls, and combating sexual and gender-based violence.

I should also mention that none of the advances in women's rights over the last century could have been possible without the existence of independent, women-led organizations and movements that started at the grassroots and pushed upwards. Grassroots women's organizations need funding and they need it to be flexible, responsive and sustainable over the long term.

In 2018, Canada created the Gender Results Framework (GRF) as a way of measuring the progress of mainstreaming this agenda and stipulated priority areas for achieving gender equality. What are these areas and what were the main scopes of this policy?

Gender equality is a top-tier priority for Canada. Our government announced a Feminist International Assistance Policy in 2016 and since then we have redoubled our efforts and commitments to furthering the gender agenda at home and abroad. The Gender Results Framework (GRF) is an important tool to help us gauge how we are doing in this regard, across the thematic areas we focus on.

The idea is that there is a transformational change happening, which aims to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls as a proven approach to pulling communities out of poverty, increasing female autonomy, and creating more inclusive global societies.

The gender agenda today cuts across several Canadian policies, both nationally and internationally, including in the areas of education; economic participation; democratic leadership and participation; gender-based violence and access to justice; poverty reduction, health and well-being; and gender equality.

One of the tools we use to make sure we are effectively supporting the gender agenda is a Gender-Based Analysis+, or GBA+ as we refer to it, which assesses the potential impacts of policies, programs and services we are supporting domestically and abroad. It takes into account the different needs of women, girls, men and boys, as well as other identity factors in all the initiatives we support.

To give an example of how the gender equality framework is worked into our everyday life, here at the Canadian Embassy and in all our Canadian consulates in Brazil, we have signed a “gender pledge”. This commitment includes integrating innovative equity practices in the workplace, and inserting this gender equity approach into our performance reports. It is just one more way to ensure this is constantly present in our thinking and our deliberations.

We hope that in this way, the inclusion of women and girls will be part of all initiatives supported by the Government of Canada nationally and internationally.

25 years after the decision of the United Nations Economic and Social Council to mainstream the gender perspective throughout its system, the gender issue has permeated the most diverse international actions and projects. Could you mention results that illustrate the global impact of this decision?



One of the essential roles of the UN system is that it establishes an understanding of basic standards and expectation for member states to abide by. It helps harmonize the actions of nations in the attainment of common ends.

On the global stage, Canada has been a leading advocate for eliminating violence against women and girls, particularly in multilateral fora. We work to promote norms and standards for the elimination of gender-based violence and urge states to respect their human rights obligations.

For example, Canada leads the biennial resolution on the Elimination of Violence against Women at the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva. The 2021 resolution focused on violence against women and girls with disabilities. We have also supported gender in the workforce, in digital contexts, and the involvement of men and boys in resolutions of recent years.

We also unequivocally support the biennial resolution on “Intensifying efforts to eliminate violence against women” in the Third Committee of the UN General Assembly and have been pleased to see a growing number of countries supporting this resolution.



Official visit of the Ambassador to Roraima, in 2019, to address issues related to refugees and indigenous peoples.

These are all important examples of results we see at the international level. However, despite the increasing global recognition of gender as a cross-cutting issue, there is still much work to be done, collectively, to combat gender-based violence and gender discrimination throughout the world.

One of the areas we are seeing an opportunity to make a real difference is in relation to sexual and reproductive health rights. Canada is doing its part. In hard numbers, we provided \$650 million to support the Her Voice, Her Choice initiative, comprehensive sexual and reproductive health programming. Sexual and reproductive health services are essential services to protect and empower women and girls.

More than 10 years ago, the UN started a movement to encourage the presence of women in areas of peace and security. How was your experience as Executive Director of Defense and Relations with Eastern Europe and Eurasia and what were your biggest challenges?

That was a really incredible period of my career, with a lot of challenges. I will give you a flavour of some of the big issues that I worked on at that time. In the Middle East, Canada was part of the Anti-ISIS Coalition and supported Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon in efforts to improve their military capabilities. In Asia, China was building up its military presence in the South China Sea. In Eastern Europe, Russia invaded Ukraine, annexing Crimea. As a NATO ally, Canada increased its presence in Europe, stationing troops in Latvia, sending frigates to the Black Sea and Mediterranean, and fighter jets to police the skies over Romania, efforts that unfortunately continue to this day and are part of our strong robust to Russia's ongoing war against Ukraine.

Beyond these areas that I was working on directly, I had the fantastic opportunity to be involved in the women, peace and security agenda, which was an eye-opening learning experience. I really appreciated the chance to work alongside so many dedicated and qualified women.

One of the most important things I took away from that experience was how comprehensive the women, peace and security agenda really needs to be. It requires the full, equal and meaningful participation of women and men at all stages of peace processes and at all levels of decision-making relevant to conflict prevention and resolution to see concrete, tangible change.

I cannot underscore enough that the women who fight for peace deserve credit for the direct positive impact they are having on preventing and ending conflict, in post-conflict settings and on the frontlines in times of crisis. In the mid-1990s, I worked on the former Yugoslavia as the country split apart through bloody conflict. I had the chance on several occasions to travel to Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia in the midst of the crisis and speak with people on the frontlines, trying to run hospitals and orphanages and quite simply keep the lights on while facing bombardment. The stories I heard reinforced the research that demonstrates a direct correlation between the meaningful participation of women and sustainable peace.

Although we have achieved some progress worldwide on this agenda, its implementation is still lagging behind. The UN Secretary-General's latest report on Women, Peace and Security for



Lunch offered by the Ambassador to the Senators of the Republic, in December 2021, in which the issues of Gender Equality in Brazil and Canada were discussed.

2021 made it very clear that we must act – urgently – to improve access to adequate funding for women peacemakers and address the rising levels of violence against them.

Finally, from this position as a woman as Head of a Diplomatic Mission and as a professional in International Relations, what advice do you give to young women and girls who dream of occupying leadership positions at the international level?

You know, things have changed since I joined the foreign service. Historically, in Canada, women have always been a minority in leadership and foreign affairs positions. But I've noticed a change over the years – there has been a significant increase in the number of women entering politics, as well as international relations and diplomacy related careers.

Let me give you some examples. In 2021, the Canadian parliamentary elections included the highest proportion of women elected in our history. Today, almost 30% of our Members of Parliament are women.

The Cabinet of the Prime Minister, also has gender parity, including for portfolios which have traditionally been held by men. Our Minister of National Defence is a woman, so is our Foreign Minister, our International Trade Minister and our Deputy Prime Minister as mentioned earlier.

The Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief of Canada, Mary Simon, is also a woman, in addition to being the first indigenous Inuk to hold the position.

We've also seen an increase in women holding leadership positions in our embassies abroad. Today, 50% of Canadian Ambassadors around the world are women.

This shift toward gender equality as a norm is so important. Having role models for women in all sectors of society is important to inspire girls to aspire to leadership roles in political life, business, science, or wherever else they want to be. I admire the women who have come before me and fought to advance women's rights and gender equality. They paved the way for the rest of us to continue to make progress on gender quality.

And I hope the next generation of women and girls will continue to push the agenda forward, because consistency and perseverance is what will help normalize this important reality. My advice to them is to set goals and not be afraid to go after them. If they are interested in the international environment specifically, be open minded and curious. Learn languages, and seek out opportunities to gain international experience. But most importantly, have the confidence and drive to go after

what they want. Women belong in these careers and they need to take their seat at the decision-making table.



Jennifer May

Ambassador of Canada in Brasil



NOTES ON GHANAIAIAN WOMEN IN DIPLOMACY

Abena P. A. Busia
Ambassador of Ghana in Brazil



To reflect on the position of women in diplomacy in Ghana in the context of gender mainstreaming is complex, and inspiring. To begin with, it must be said women in the diplomatic service in Ghana is almost as old as the nation state itself. But the question is, at what level are they serving? We have a long tradition of women in government service, who still today, swell the secretarial and other support staff ranks, across units, with great dedication. However, I focus here on the “Category A” officers whose career paths should eventually lead to being commissioned as Ambassadors.

With Ghana at least, there are two distinct sets of people at Ambassadorial rank; those career diplomats who rise through the ranks of their chosen profession as career civil servants in the foreign ministry to attain the rank of Ambassador at the pinnacle of their careers; and those who, like myself, who are political appointees- people who have essentially risen to prominence in other chosen fields to a degree so notable that their foreign ministers and heads of state deem them fit to serve as representatives of the nation. Throughout her existence as a nation, Ghana has produced women of distinction in both categories across the political spectrum, and our Heads of State, of all political persuasion, have been notable for their appointment of women throughout our history. I myself came to the diplomatic service at the end of a forty-year career at Rutgers University, rising from a graduate student visiting lecturer on July 1, 1981 to Prof Emerita on Dec 31 2022.

Any cursory glance at a list of Ghanaian Ambassadors currently serving will look very impressive. I am part of the class of 2017, arguably the largest cohort of female ambassadors appointed in a single term by the current President Nana Addo

Dankwa Akufo Addo where about 40% of us were women, including 11 of the twelve serving in Europe. But it must be said, mainstreaming is not simply a question of numbers. The 1997 agreed conclusions of ECOSOC defined gender mainstreaming as: “The process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality.”

So, to clarify what is necessary beyond the numbers, there are five established principles namely: Gender-sensitive language in all texts including gender-sensitive choice of images; Gender-specific data collection and analysis; Equal access to and utilisation of services; All are equally involved in decision making; and Equal treatment integrated into steering processes which include quality management and gender budgeting. This last point is vital because paying attention to the different circumstances and conditions of women and men, the ways in which work conditions impact them differently, and are clearly disaggregated for impact, eventually improves the effectiveness of the mainstreaming processes put in place.

This is much harder than it would seem, which is what made the UN resolutions necessary. A light-hearted, yet illustrative anecdote might illustrate the point: four years ago, at the end of the weeks of training for newly appointed ambassadors, it was explained to us that the service supported us traveling to post with two domestic staff – a “cook” and a “butler”. At this the women, in the majority, many of us single through choice, divorce or widowhood, objected that a “butler” was not what we needed, what we needed was personal assistants, or, for those with young children, nannies. After much banter, the beleaguered Senior Accounting Officer allowed that we could choose our people and call them whatsoever we so chose, but they would appear in the record books as “cook” and “butler”. Amusing as the exchange was, it was highly significant because that one word “butler” retains in all its symbolic grandeur the colonial and masculinist roots of a service which, everywhere in the world, seems designed for aristocratic men, with wives in tow, and not for single people, especially not single professional women with young children in their care. Thus, the retention of “butler” can be seen as emblematic of the deep-seated matter at hand.

Furthermore, though as women we have much in common in negotiating our situations, for the purposes of this essay, reflecting on the impact of gender mainstreaming on the profession of diplomacy, the distinction between the two modes of appointment is crucial; for this issue the

important story is that of the career diplomats. Like many other countries, including Brazil where I currently serve as the first Ghanaian female appointed to a mission going back sixty years, the road to the top has been slow, but some argue not as arduous for Ghanaian women career diplomats as in other countries[1], for interesting reasons. These reasons have been illuminated for me through conversations with some of our distinguished retired ambassadors.

According to H.E. Nana Araba Bema Kumi, former Ghanaian diplomat who also served as Ghana’s Ambassador to the European Union, women were encouraged to join the foreign service early, and from the very start received equal pay for equal work. After nearly forty years of service, she looks back on a career in which she believes she and her cohorts were treated fairly and advanced on equal terms with their male counterparts. Today she is Vice Rector and Secretary to the Board of Nyansapo College, an institution founded to train a new generation of diplomats.

On the same issue however, Retired Ambassador and Special Envoy to the President H.E. Annan Cato points out that the issue in the early years was that the numbers of women applying were small, the impediments being socio-cultural rather than governmental. He noted for instance, that within

the first few years of independence, women such as Mrs Gloria Nikoi had entered the service. However, Mrs Nikoi’s career is perhaps emblematic; she was actually the first woman to be appointed as an ambassador, an appointment she declined for family reasons - her children were young and her husband himself was at a crucial stage of his own diplomatic career[2]. She followed him, rather than he following her, (a gesture which at the time may well have been unthinkable). However, Mrs Nikoi herself did rise to become, for a few months in July 1979[3], the first woman Minister of Foreign Affairs. It took almost thirty-five years before another woman, the Honourable Hannah Tetteh occupied the post for one term in 2013.[4] The current Minister the Honourable Shirley Ayorkor Botchway appointed in 2017, is now in the middle of a record second term.



However, though Ghana has had women in the foreign service for as long as she has been a nation, it was approximately twenty-five years before Mrs Agnes Aggrey-Orleans became the first career diplomat woman to be appointed ambassador, after which she had several appointments including to the Holy See. In her case though, she and her fellow diplomat husband, the late Ambassador James Aggrey-Orleans[4], did succeed in managing equally distinguished parallel diplomatic careers, and raise their sons together. Her career flourished and she is today one of the central resources in the training of younger diplomats. Mercifully these days, thanks to social change and great technological advancements that make distance employment possible, a generation of women have found spouses with both the ability and willingness to rethink how they pursue their careers to support the advancement of their wives. Today the cohort of “A” officers is very different, and of the over 60 officers currently serving, the majority are women.

It is not only our acknowledgment as individual women that is at issue, but the ability of the career structure to admit and promote women, and to do that in equal numbers into the upper division grades. Ambassador Kumi attributes the slowness in increase after her own cohort entered the service in the 1970s to the political instability and economic recessions of the decade of the 1980s which imposed internal restrictions on recruitment and promotion.

If we consider our international civil servants who have risen as diplomats in such organizations as the United Nations there also Ghana has a story. Mrs Martha Pobee who was appointed Ghana’s Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the UN from 2015 to 2020 is today Assistant Secretary-General for Africa in charge of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and Peace Operations. Her appointment highlights a singular success of Ghanaian women in leadership positions in the UN system today. In the East Africa Region, the chain of command goes up from Kiki Gbeho as Deputy Special Representative for the United Nations Assistance Mission in



Somalia^[5] reporting to Hannah Tetteh, the Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa reporting to Martha Pobee as Assistant Secretary-General for Africa. These three women with their different trajectories, shed an interesting light on the possibilities for some in the UN system.

Though it seems Ghana may be the exception that proves the rule, significantly it is hard to use her as a case study because one of the central tenets of the mainstreaming process is hard to meet; the disaggregation of information, including dates and statistics to tell the women’s story. These reflections have inspired me to investigate more on the issue. What I have written here has been largely anecdotal^[6].

Abena P. A. Busia

Ambassador of Ghana in Brazil



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[1] For an enlightening film Brazilian women in diplomacy see: “Exteriores: Mulheres Brasileiras na Diplomacia” (“Exteriors: Brazilian Women in Diplomacy”).

[2] She was married to H.E. Amon Nikoi, economist and diplomat who was Ghana’s representative to the UN and later Governor of the Bank of Ghana.

[3] Under the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) government of Flight lieutenant Jerry Rawlings before the inauguration of our Third Republic in September 1979.

[4] Today she serves as UN Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa, after serving as Special Representative of the Secretary-General to the African Union and Head of the UN Office to the AU.

[5] Ghanaian High Commissioner to the United Kingdom and Ambassador to Ireland from October 1997 to March 2001.

[6] Anita Kiki Gbeho has had a long and dedicated career with the UN where, starting as a tour guide over three decades she has risen to her current prominent leadership position where, until the appointment of Their Excellencies Tetteh and Pobee, last year, she was the senior Ghanaian woman in the international civil service.

[7] My sincere thanks to Ambassadors Cato and Kumi for sharing their reflections on their distinguished careers and to my niece Kiki Gbeho for her observations on being an international civil servant of a generation younger.

GENDER MAINSTREAMING STRATEGY: ADVANCES AND CHALLENGES

Anastasia Divinskaya
UN Women Representative in Brazil

This year we commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Agreed Conclusions on mainstreaming the gender perspective into policies and programmes in the United Nations (UN) system adopted by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).[1] This notable achievement triggered changes in our internal policies and operations on the grounds of all UN entities and has become an integral part of the UN Development System Reform. The ECOSOC defined gender mainstreaming as a strategy for making women's and men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of all policies and programmes in all spheres, with the ultimate goal of achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women.

The gender equality and women's empowerment mandate is universally agreed by UN Member States. It encompasses all areas of peace, development and human rights. The mandates on gender equality derive from the UN Charter, which unequivocally reaffirmed the equal rights of men and women and reinforced by the visionary 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda[2]. ECOSOC Agreed Conclusions (1997) built on the gender mainstreaming strategy of the landmark Beijing Declaration and Plan of Action, adopted at the IV World Conference on Women (1995)[3].

The fundamental transformation that took place following the Beijing and echoed in ECOSOC Agreed Conclusions was the recognition of the need to shift the focus from women only to the concept of gender, recognizing that the entire structure of society, and all relations between men and women within it, had to be re-evaluated. Only by such a fundamental restructuring of society and its institutions could women be fully empowered to take their rightful place as equal partners with men in all aspects of life.

The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) is a result of both, the demand by the women's movement for a strong and consolidated action by the UN, as well as of the UN Reform.



When the General Assembly created UN Women in 2010, it transferred to the new entity the mandates and functions of the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, the Division for the Advancement of Women, the UN Development Fund for Women and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, with the additional role of leading, coordinating and promoting accountability of the UN System in its work on gender equality and the empowerment of women.

Supporting the UN Country Team with coordination, coherence and gender mainstreaming across the UN action in Brazil, UN Women also provides, through its normative and operational mandate, a guidance and technical support to executive, judiciary and legislative branches at their request, on gender equality, the empowerment and intersecting human rights of women and girls. We have unique relations with diverse women's and human rights movements in Brazil, which allow us to swiftly identify the needs and causes of inequalities and to take action on the ground. Working as a part of the UN Country Team, we lead and coordinate their work on gender equality and the empowerment of women through the Inter-Agency Thematic Group on Gender, Race and Ethnicity, including 19 entities.

The established UN structures, the agreed conclusions and the common strategies facilitate cooperation of the UN with Brazil and the other member-states in achieving the vision of 2030 Agenda: development will only be sustainable if its benefits accrue equally to both women and men, particularly those facing multiple forms of discrimination and thus being left behind.

The past decades have seen the reaffirmation of gender equality as inextricably linked to achieving sustainable development for all:

- 131 countries have passed laws to support women's equality, including to increase access to health care and good quality education, and to promote women's political representation;
- More countries have reached gender parity in educational enrolment;
- Fewer women are dying in childbirth as the global maternal mortality ratio declined;
- 70% of States have strengthened social protection; and three quarters have introduced or strengthened maternity, paternity or parental leave to address women's disproportionate share of unpaid care and domestic work;

- There has been constant progress over the past two decades in the enactment of legislation to address violence against women[4].

Just these examples of progress mean that aligned vision, agreed strategies and collaborative action by the UN and the member states apparently yield the results. A recent review of the UN System's work on gender equality and the empowerment of women, including analysis of 51 entities' support to the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda demonstrated an overall growth in scope of the work for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.. The UN system's highest priorities during the reporting period were: the elimination of violence against women and girls, transformation of discriminatory norms, the improvement of access to quality education, the expansion of women's political participation and women's entrepreneurship.[5]

At the same time, despite these positive developments overall the progress falls short of what the member States committed to:

- Unpaid care and domestic work remain stubbornly feminized.
- Less than two-thirds of women are in the labour force and nearly 400 million live in extreme poverty.
- Weak enforcement of domestic violence laws means that 243 million women are victims of violence from an intimate partner each year.
- Women's under-representation in positions of power remains the norm: men hold 75% of parliamentary seats and 73% of managerial positions.
- Men constitute 70% of climate negotiators, while a climate crisis has disproportionate devastating impacts on the most marginalized women and girls[6].

There still is a lot of work ahead.



Moving forward we have to consider the fundamental shifts in the global gender equality landscape have taken place over the last decades. Among these importantly, is a fact that the gains of development have not been shared equally, with wealth and power concentrated among the few, while economic insecurity prevails for the many. Across every sphere, from health to the economy, security to social protection, the impacts of COVID-19 are exacerbated for women and girls. The world is seeing the rise of exclusionary politics grounded in misogyny, racism and xenophobia, with democratic erosions, while push-back against gender equality is becoming stronger. The increasing push-back against women's rights occurs not only through regressive policy reforms, but also through a less visible hollowing out of institutions mandated to advance gender equality.

Another important trend is a rise of the women's movements globe-wise. Energized by young feminists, they are challenging slow and piecemeal progress and are impatient for systemic change in the face of these multiple crises. We can learn from the ways in which these movements work across silos and political boundaries, seeing their work to advance the rights of women and girls as inextricably linked to the achievement of economic, social and environmental justice for all. These movements are proposing brave new alternatives for a different world, challenging the power asymmetries that have led the world to the current point of crisis.

Today in Brazil, amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, the hard-won progress on gender equality and women's rights is increasingly precarious and is at risk of being reversed, especially for marginalized groups of women and girls, such as indigenous, black, women with disabilities and others. This is a vital moment for the UN system's partnership with the government and multiple stakeholders to assess progress, identify gaps and take actions. The lessons learned over the last 25 years require actions, both immediate and more systemic and longer-term to accelerate the progress.

A part of the UN Country Team, UN Women through its unique mandate cooperates with Brazil as it strives to adhere to global standards for achieving gender equality and women's empowerment. We work with government, congress, judiciary and civil society to design laws, policies and services needed to ensure that the standards are effectively implemented and truly benefit diverse women and girls. We partner to make the vision of the Sustainable Development a reality for all women and girls and stand behind women's equal participation in all aspects of life, focusing on three strategic priorities in line with the national priorities: Gender-responsive governance and women's leadership and participation; Women's economic empowerment and Elimination of violence against women and girls.

In the UN, we know that applying our common strength and resources to mutual objectives, our chances of achieving a critical mass of results are far stronger. Now more than ever, urgent, sustained and coordinated action by the UN system is needed to safeguard gender equality gains and advance the rights and well-being of women and girls in Brazil. With this understanding in mind, we are developing the new UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework with the Government of Brazil for the next four years.

Anastasia Divinskaya
UN Women Representative in
Brazil



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THE ROLE OF ITAMARATY IN THE DIFFUSION OF BRAZILIAN CULTURE AND THE PORTUGUESE LANGUAGE ABROAD

Ambassador Paula Alves de Souza
Director of the Cultural and Educational Department
at the Foreign Affairs Ministry of Brazil



I joined the Brazilian diplomatic career in 1994, after concluding a Master's degree on International Relations. It was my first professional experience, enriched, throughout the years, by the diversity among countries where I served and by the distinct areas of diplomacy which I worked at.

I served at the Brazilian Embassies in Washington, in Buenos Aires, and in Beijing. Since my return to Brasília, I was in the Audiovisual Promotion Division (DAV), Payment Division (DPAG) and Cultural and Educational Department (DCED), where I currently work. My professional journey is quite atypical, as I have been stationed in Brasília for 15 years, something unusual for a diplomat. This decision was made for professional and personal reasons, as I sought to combine my career with my children's education: a challenge that marked my life since my daughter was born - the same year I became a diplomat, by the way.

Also unconventionally in the diplomat career, in which we are taught to be essentially generalists, I specialized on a specific area of Brazil's Foreign Policy: the cultural diffusion of Brazil abroad. I've worked at the DAV, whose mission was the international promotion of Brazilian audiovisual, for 6 years, and directed the DCED for 4 years, shaping most of my career around culture and Portuguese language issues. For this reason, it is worth to paint a comprehensive picture of the work done by Itamaraty in these areas.



The Cultural and Educational Department, one of the most traditional units of Itamaraty, is composed, currently, by three divisions: Activities for the Promotion of Brazilian Culture, responsible for the conception and follow-up of cultural promotion efforts abroad, in a myriad of artistic languages and different segments of creative economy; Educational Issues, which handles educational subjects at international organisms, like OECD¹, MERCOSUL, UNESCO² and OAS³, while managing official programs of educational cooperation, like PEC-G and PEC-PG; and International Cultural Themes and Portuguese Language, answering for the bilateral and multilateral management of the Portuguese language, Brazilian variation.

As one of the fundamental pillars of Brazilian public diplomacy, DCED develops its work based on guidelines of cultural diffusion and educational cooperation activities, focusing on the establishment of institutional bridges, acting consistently and repeatedly, and collaborating with representative segments of the Brazilian creative industry, delegates from the educational field and relevant professionals abroad.

Itamaraty's role in cultural dissemination is, traditionally, linked to supporting events proposed by our network of Posts abroad, as well as those produced directly by them, or by third parties requiring financial aid, prioritizing activities in the areas perceived to display major interest and major potential for protecting the Brazilian culture locally.

For this reason, cultural activities, in 2022, will be essentially focused on celebrating the bicentennial of the Brazilian Independence. It is worth to mention that

¹Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
²United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
³Organization of American States

Itamaraty integrates the Brazil 200 Years Inter-ministerial Committee, under whose authority it organizes activities related to the festivity. In this context, our Offices were instructed, as far back as May 2021, to prioritize the celebration of the bicentennial in the cultural program to be developed in each jurisdiction. It was recommended that each Office sought, in the conception of their activities, to identify references that, where possible, would reassure the symbolic aspects of bilateral relations between Brazil and the host country, with its local society, such as common interest personalities, historical and artistic features, highlights, landmarks and dates.

It is worth mentioning the cultural areas covered: Architecture, Performing Arts, Visual Arts, Audiovisual, Design, Gastronomy, Literature, and Music. Since September 7th, 2021, more than 20 activities related to the bicentennial were carried out, with a total attendance of over 15 thousand people, in spite of the pandemic-imposed restrictions. For 2022, we are expecting to hold more than 200 activities related to the bicentennial celebration, coming from 93 Offices in 80 countries.

Regarding the dissemination of the Portuguese Language, Itamaraty manages a Portuguese education network composed of 24 Cultural Centers, 5 Education Hubs and 32 Lectureships at foreign universities (expecting to reach 45 until the end of the year).

This network, distributed along almost 40 countries, hosted, in 2020, a public of more than 12 thousand students, having developed approximately 120 projects of Portuguese Language, not only as a Foreign Language but also as Heritage Language, focused on Brazilian communities abroad.



Aiming to harmonize the diffusion of our language among these units, guidelines were launched in early 2019 on how Brazil should disseminate Portuguese around the world. Unified curricula for Itamaraty's Offices network general use were also produced, then published by the Alexandre de Gusmão Foundation.

It is also worth to mention that the virtualization of education and cultural activities was made urgent since the developments of the pandemic. An important aspect of adapting to this new reality is the development of capacities for teaching staff, and so virtual training sessions were held during this period.

Itamaraty also offers a Lectureship Program, developed abroad in partnership with CAPES, seeking to channel the great potential displayed by carefully selected professionals who operate in universities of international excellence. Lecturers find themselves in a privileged position to witness innovations and richer scenarios for education and the diffusion of the Portuguese language, as well as to promote the Brazilian culture.

In the field of educational cooperation, the third pillar in which the DCED's work is supported, there are traditional programs being coordinated with CAPES and CNPq: the Graduation Students Agreement (PEC-G) and the Post Graduation (PEC-PG). As the main tools of education cooperation in Brazil, the PECs offer free opportunities of studying at Brazilian Higher Education Institutions (IES) to students whose countries hold educational, cultural or scientific-technological agreements with Brazil, through PEC-G, and scholarships for Masters and Doctorate Degrees in the case of PEC-PG. The managerial aspect of PEC-G is shared with the Higher Education Secretariat at the Education and Culture Ministry (MEC), and that of PEC-PG is shared with CAPES and CNPq, the responsible parties for paying scholarships.

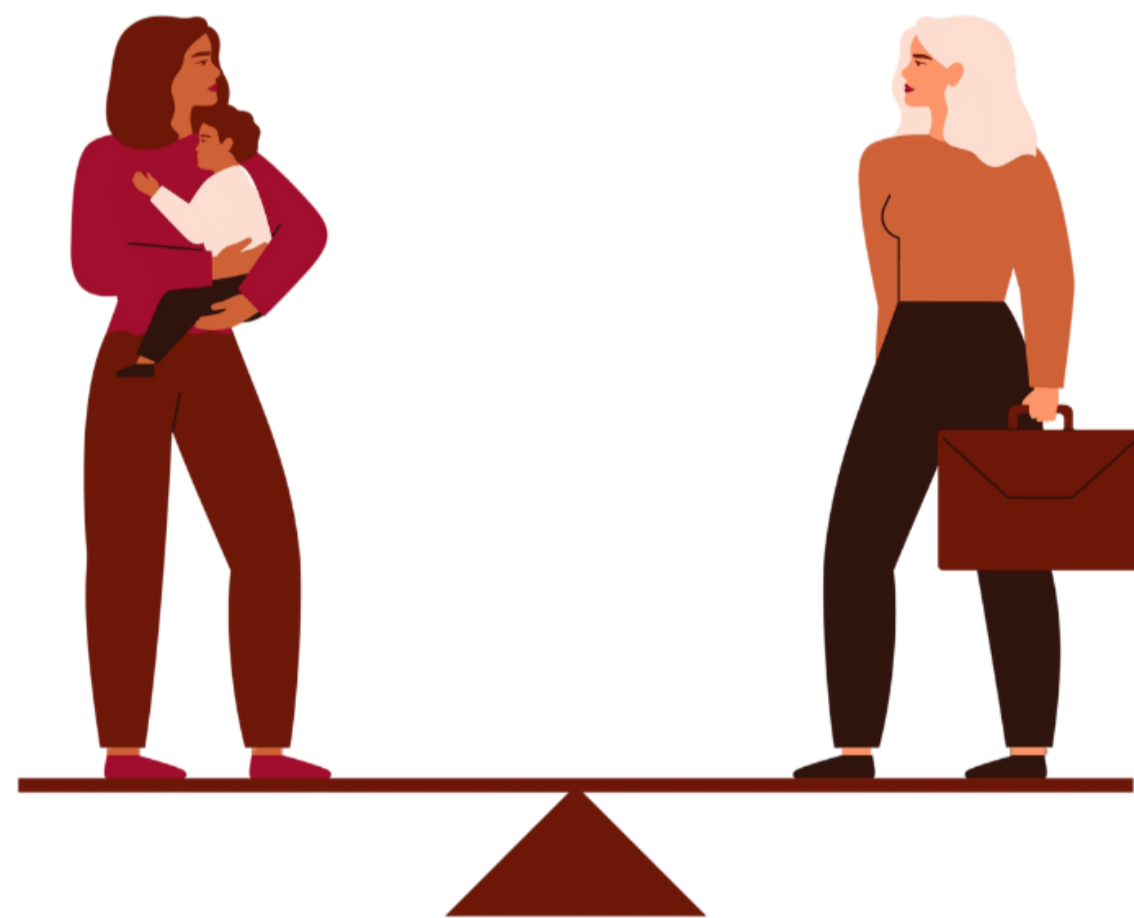
The program outreach contributes to the strengthening of bilateral relations with partner countries, and to the internationalization of Brazilian IES. From 2000 to 2020, more than 10.000 students concluded their higher education in Brazil, only under the PEC-G, returning to their origin countries to take on eminent roles in their communities.



It is still worth to mention two naval formation programs, in partnership with the Major-State of Armada (EMA): the Program of Maritime Professional Education for Foreigners (PEPME), aimed at training and qualifying merchant navy officers, and the Annual Program of Short Courses (PACCD), aimed at training ship crews for activities that require special qualifications.

Having described my work in Itamaraty, I conclude, on a personal note, that, after 28 years since I joined the MRE, I have always been met with the series of challenges imposed to the diplomatic profession, especially women, given its itinerant nature. In my case, throughout this period, I raised two children, now adults, at the same time I reached the peak of my career.

I feel proud of arriving at this point, because reconciling professional and personal trajectories was no easy task. I could not say if my path would have been more simple were I not a diplomat today. I only believe it was worth the effort. As civil servant of the Brazilian State, I have the privilege of reflecting about Brazil today while seeking to contribute to what we will be in the future. There could not be, in my view, a more gratifying professional experience.



Ambassador Paula Alves de Sousa

Director of the Cultural and Educational
Department at the Foreign Affairs Ministry

A FEMINIST FOREIGN POLICY AND THE CHALLENGES OF TODAY

Anders Wollter

Chargé d'Affaires of the Embassy of Sweden in
Brazil

When Margot Wallström, the former minister for foreign affairs, declared in 2014 that Sweden was to pursue a feminist foreign policy many eyebrows were raised.

Less than eight years later, feminist foreign policy has been established as a new standard. Today, six more countries are pursuing this policy – Canada, France, Luxembourg, Spain, Mexico and recently Germany.

There are several reasons for this extraordinary development. First is, of course, the situation for women and girls around the world and the will to do something about it. Sadly, the full enjoyment of human rights for women and girls is the unfinished business of the last century.

Several studies and research show that gender equality is essential for sustainable development, economic growth, and peace. We also know that gender equality is central for democracy, as well as for kick-starting climate adaptation. Not to mention that it creates wellbeing for all – needless to say, also for men.

Unfortunately, the pandemic risks rolling back progress on global gender equality. Combined with a shrinking democratic space in many contexts, the situation is serious.

With the recent developments in Europe, we sadly see even more reasons to defend the rules-based world order, rule of law, human rights, and peaceful resolution of conflicts and peaceful resolution of conflicts. A feminist approach is central in addressing those challenges.

Gender equality is a fundamental prerequisite for Sweden to achieve its overall foreign policy goals. Sustainable peace, security and the fulfilment of the Sustainable Development Goals cannot be achieved if we exclude or diminish half of the population.

All Swedish diplomats and civil servants are expected to view everything through a gender lens, taking an integrated and systematic approach to integrating gender equality into all policies and actions.

Our feminist foreign policy is completely integrated into the daily operations of our more than 100 diplomatic missions abroad – Embassies, Consulates, and representations to international

organisations. As governmental representatives, we must ensure that gender equality is integrated with policy decisions and allocations. The aim is to promote women's and girls' empowerment in all stages of life, and in all spheres. To make this happen, we need gender-responsive public governance systems and gender-responsive social protection systems. To eliminate discriminatory laws is key.

In this work, we also need to work in close cooperation with civil society, in particular with women's rights organisations, but also with trade unions and businesses.

In practical terms, Sweden has organised its feminist foreign policy around three Rs: rights, representation, and resources. This is the framework we use when analysing the contexts in which we work.

What do statistics say about disparities between women and men, girls, and boys? Do they have the same rights to education, work, inheritance, marriage, and divorce? Are they represented where decisions are made in parliaments, local councils, and other political arenas? Is gender equality considered when resources are allocated in central budgets or development assistance projects?

On the global stage, during Sweden's term as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council, we consistently promoted the integration of the gender perspective into the day-to-day work of the council, in all geographical and thematic contexts and in talks on resolutions and declarations.



We invited reporting by women's rights organisations to inform the Security Council of the situation of women and girls in various conflict situations. Last year, this systematic approach was taken forward during the Swedish term as chair of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe and will continue throughout our forthcoming presidency of the council of the European Union in 2023.

Even trade agreements are analysed in terms of gender under our feminist trade policy. Strong political leadership is needed, and it takes courage and patience. This leadership needs to be combined with clear ownership and lines of responsibility at all levels. A gender perspective must be integrated into systems, processes and responsibility structures.

Through our feminist foreign policy, we have achieved significant results. One example is Sweden's establishment of a network of women mediators who are active all around the world, championing issues relating to women, peace and security. We have also substantially increased our financial support for gender equality initiatives.

Today, about 85 per cent of Swedish bilateral development aid is gender-mainstreamed or has gender equality as the main objective.

Dialogue with, protection of, and support for women's rights organisations and women's human rights defenders are key elements of Sweden's feminist foreign policy. Sweden supports umbrella organisations for women's rights groups that can offer support and protection to women human rights defenders worldwide, for example, we have done so in Afghanistan, Indonesia, Syria and Pakistan.

Sweden is also a global champion of sexual and reproductive health and rights, and we are one of the largest donors to the UN Population Fund. This is important, not least in view of widespread resistance to gender equality and sexual and reproductive health and rights from various countries and movements.



We have pushed for women's economic empowerment as it is critical to gender equality, and it is also the area that is most behind. According to the World Economic Forum, another generation of women will have to wait for gender parity since the pandemic has widened the global gender gap. The severe economic effects on women by the pandemic is connected to the fact that women have less access to economic resources, more often work in informal or low-paid jobs and have less or no access to social protection. In addition, women take the majority of the responsibility for unpaid care work.

Sweden is currently co-leading an Action Coalition on Economic Justice and Rights within the UN initiative Generation Equality. In this coalition, we have committed to working to strengthen women's economic empowerment over five years.

A lesson learnt from our feminist foreign policy work is that gender equality often arouses strong reactions. It touches upon key issues such as the distribution of power, resources, and influence, but also on the personal lives of individuals. It is crucial to be context-specific and to rely on research, experience and well-founded arguments that show that gender equality benefits society at large, for example in terms of social and economic development.

Sweden's foreign policy, which is avowedly feminist, is an important step towards a more equal world. And as long as the daily lives of women and girls around the world are marked by discrimination and systematic subordination, feminists' foreign policies will be needed all around the globe. We cannot quiet our efforts for this. It is necessary to evolve even more in the promotion of the rights of girls and women, in the search for a more just, peaceful, and sustainable world. The emancipation and empowerment of women are, in addition to promoting human rights and the rule of law, fundamental for the economic and social development of the world.



A great deal of work remains to be done, and new challenges arise as presently seen in Europe. But the progress over the past seven years shows that pursuing a feminist foreign policy makes a difference – for all. Not only women and girls.

May every day be a search for this equity.

Anders Wollter

Chargé d’Affaires of the Embassy of
Sweden in Brazil



CITIES NETWORKS AND GENDER



By clicking on each logo, it will be possible to explore the complete operation.

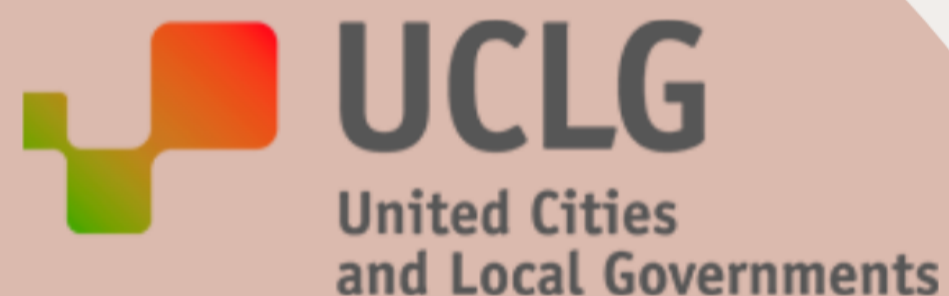
CITIES NETWORKS AND GENDER

WHAT ARE CITIES NETWORKS?

In a period of time when more than half of the world's population is located in urban centres, it is essential to reflect on the role of cities in societies. These big cities are capable of offering efforts to help develop their countries and have a short distance between the needs and demands of citizens, and their governors.

On this path, the international cities networks present themselves as an opportunity of international projection of non-central governments, just like reflection spaces and exchanges of well succeeded practices in local management, and, mainly, as an international repercussion channel. Starting from the discussions and the disclosure of referring reports to the developed works at its scope, the problems faced by local governments, and also global problems, which are solidified around the territories of subnational governments.

The United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) network is a global organization that brings together more than 150 thousand affiliated cities and its mission is to act as a representative for local governments in international organizations and forums, increasing the degree of involvement of subnational actors in global governance institutions. UCLG advocates that local and regional authorities from all corners of the world become the main source of intelligence, best practices and support for democratic, effective and innovative government.



On its last published material, on Women's International Day, UCLG reaffirms the study presenting the disproportionality of impact the pandemic caused on women and girls, bringing to the surface the importance of gender as part of countries' agendas, assuring safety, equality and social justice in the local scope. Owning a female leadership guarantees certain principles to the female population, like the mainstreaming of the issue, through human rights, safety, education and social economic development.

UCLG launched a podcast series called 'Feminist Cities and Territories', with conversations between feminist leaderships all around the world, reflecting over concepts, such as 'feminized' politics, and others. The organization also contributes to represent the [municipal feminist movement](#) at the 66th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW66)..



MERCOCIUDADES

Since 1995, the Mercociudades work to build a regional integration, based on respect to diversity, as well as an active and borderless citizenship. It is an organization present in Mercosur countries and its associates - it has 364 member cities from 10 South American countries (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, Venezuela, Chile, Bolivia, Ecuador, Peru and Colombia), counting on more than 120 million inhabitants.

Currently, the network is divided into 15 Thematic Units and 7 Working Groups and Commissions, which disseminate successful experiences, contribute to the formulation of public policies and promote research. They arise as a response to the needs of their member cities to work with different areas of relevance to society.

Regarding the gender thematic, the Mercociudades engages in pushing the problems they face, by reducing the still enduring gaps among men and women. In its last post, the Thematic Unit of Genders and Municipalities (UTGM) organized the Argentinian action to celebrate the International Women's Day, focusing on the fight for health rights, political and cultural representation, and economics. UTGM brought up the historical aspect of March 8th, exemplifying all the South-American women who were essential to the achievement of the above mentioned fight points at the action's event.

metropolis ●

The Network of Big Metroplis is an Non-Governmental Organization, with the main goal of encouraging international cooperation and develop policies to solve problems faced by big urban centers in the planet, especially regarding urban development and planning. Metropolis is represented by 141 metropolises scattered throughout the world and acting as an international forum to explore common issues and concerns to all big cities.

One of the main focal points is the "Mainstreaming of Gender", through which it is offered more visibility to the organization member metropolises commitment action's, that assure the access to women and girls in urban centers through public policies, strategies and

mechanism, promoting gender equality across society local and regionally. More specifically, the SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), are worked out at Metropolis, emphasizing topics like sustainable mobility and public space safety.

According to the network's Strategic-Plan 2021-2023, 65% of the employees at the General-Secretariat are women; 85% of interns are also of the female gender, and among the 170 experts collaborating with the network, 85 are women. The organization affirms that 52% of the public attending events organized by Metropolis is female, and of the 25 recent publications, 21 of them approach the gender perspective as a mainstream. Nevertheless, gender inequality at leadership roles is evident, shown in the data that only 16,8% of metropolises' network are led by women.

In one of the latest publications, the organization exposes a study about how the COVID-19 pandemic influenced gender violence, mainly women's access to public spaces and transportation.



The Union of Ibero-American Capital Cities (UCCI) is an organization integrating 29 capital cities of the Ibero-American region, which share principles and face similar challenges. At 38 years of existence, the network cares for the dialogue and reassuring bonds between the member cities, through the promotion of solidarity and cooperation, just like the exchange of experiences and good practices.

Since 1989, with the creation of Sectoral Committee, UCCI's work have become more agile and operative, to deepen subjects discussed at the municipal sphere. Gender thematic issues worked at UCCI are conducted in the scope of the Equality Sectoral Committee, currently inserted at the Vice-Presidency of Social Policy and Well-being.

The network also promotes events and initiatives regarding gender matters. For example, recently, partnered with the International Association of Public Transport (UITP), the webinar "Gender equality today for a sustainable tomorrow" happened. In the same way, last year, the virtual event "Women who motivate" was promoted, organized by the Municipality of Quito, in celebration of the International Women's Day, aiming on knowing successful experiences of women who lead entities that control public spaces and the challenges they go through.



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