

# Financing care systems and policies in Latin America and the Caribbean

## CONTRIBUTIONS FOR A SUSTAINABLE RECOVERY WITH GENDER EQUALITY

Lucía Scuro  
Cecilia Alemany  
Raquel Coello Cremades  
(coordinators)



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01

THE CENTRALITY  
OF CARE IN LATIN AMERICA  
AND THE CARIBBEAN

The concept of the centrality of care has been incorporated gradually, if unevenly, into public agendas in Latin America and the Caribbean, driven by growing political commitments and the contributions of women's movements and feminist economic analyses. These contributions have drawn attention to the need to reorganize and redistribute care work as the key to shaping more egalitarian and inclusive societies.

Over the course of more than four decades, the member States of ECLAC, meeting at sessions of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, have adopted the Regional Gender Agenda, which aims to safeguard the rights of women, advance their autonomy, and lay the foundations for societies with equality. In this regard, governments have adopted a number of agreements that are essential for designing and implementing care policies. The agreements reaffirm the principles of universality and progressivity in access to quality care services, the importance of co-responsibility between men and women, and among the State, the market, communities, and families, as well as the importance of promoting the financial sustainability of public care policies aimed at achieving gender equality.

Among the most recent agreements reached, in 2016, under its pillar on financing and resource mobilization for gender equality, the Montevideo Strategy establishes that the private sector's contribution to financing public services and social protection should be ensured through progressive taxation, and that the State should avoid tax privileges (ECLAC, 2017). The Santiago Commitment explicitly mentions the need to "implement gender-sensitive countercyclical policies, in order to mitigate the impact of economic crises and recessions on women's lives and promote regulatory frameworks and policies to galvanize the economy in key sectors, including the care economy" (ECLAC, 2020a, pp. 9-10).

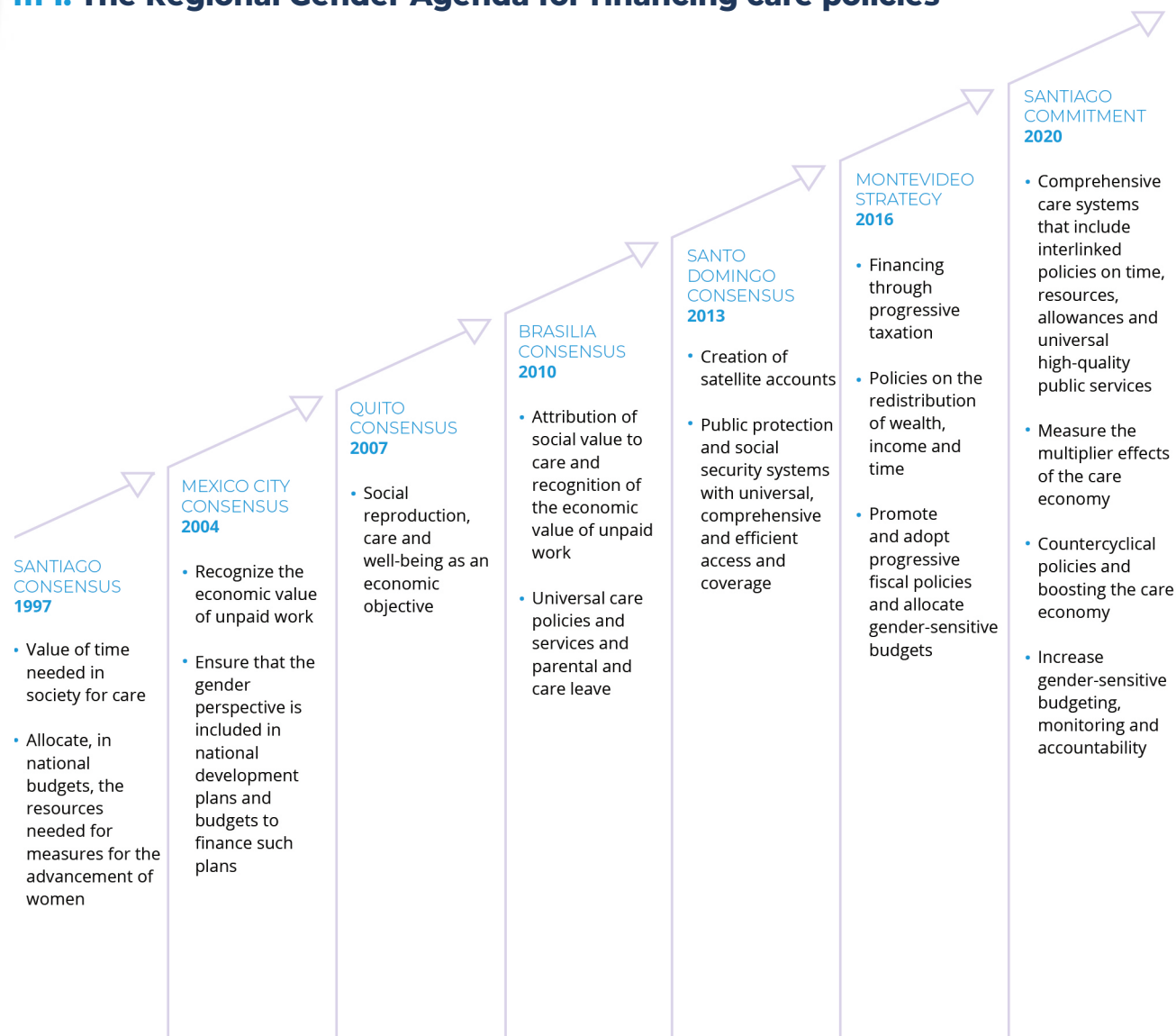
Global recognition of the importance of addressing the care crisis is reflected in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Target 5.4 establishes the need to "recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate" (United Nations, n/d).

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## m 1. The Regional Gender Agenda for financing care policies



and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of ECLAC, "Regional Gender Agenda", n/d [online] <https://www.cepal.org/en/subsidiary-i-and-caribbean/regional-gender-agenda> [accessed on 18 August 2022].