

## Question by Canada at Tuesday, 31 August 2021

**Category: Progress towards the achievement of its quantified economy-wide emission reduction target**

**Type: Before 31 August**

**Title: Gender and human rights perspective**

***Canada congratulates Luxembourg for its engagement on gender equality in the context of climate change. Can Luxembourg share challenges, experiences and lessons learned relating to including a gender and human rights perspective in its climate action?***

Luxembourg thanks Canada for its interest on its engagement on gender equality and human rights in the context of climate change.

In the last years, Luxembourg adopted a **variety of strategies and action plans** to ensure a high level of **gender mainstreaming** in our national and international policy agenda.

### On the national level

The national policy of equality between women and men is governed, on the one hand, by the provisions of the coalition agreement and, on the other hand, by the **National Action Plan for Equality**. Each ministry and administration is thus required to fully respect gender equality in the development of its policies, legal texts, programs and action plans and any other measure, in accordance with the principle of **gender mainstreaming**.

Every time **new legislation or regulations** are drafted (including sustainability- and climate-related ones), equal opportunities are considered and assessed via an **impact assessment form** that is mandatory in the process. This was also done when we drafted our Climate Law, which was adopted at the end of 2020.

Also, the **Ministry of Equality between Women and Men is also part of Luxembourg's inter-ministerial committee on Sustainable Development**, where it ensures the respect of an inclusive approach to gender issues and human rights on our themes and priorities. It is also worth mentioning that gender equality is included as a development challenge under the priority action area "Ensuring social inclusion and education for all" in Luxembourg's National Plan for Sustainable Development.

### On the international level

During its candidacy for a **Human Rights Council seat** – which has officially been approved on 14<sup>th</sup> of October - Luxembourg was actively promoting the link between human rights and climate change as one of its priorities in its application (among others, namely equality, children's rights, the protection of the environment and climate, the respect for the rule of law). In this context, Luxembourg was a proud supporter of the recently adopted resolutions on the "**human right to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment**" and the "**mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of climate change**".

Moreover, Luxembourg is committed to implementing measures to combat climate change that contribute to equal opportunities, empowerment of women and girls and respect for human rights. Luxembourg recognizes that **climate change has a gender impact** and that strengthening the action

and leadership of women and girls will contribute to improving the effectiveness of the fight against climate change and the level of ambition in all areas.

Therefore, Luxembourg included **gender as an eligibility AND selection criterion** for projects or programs seeking **international climate finance (ICF)**. In the revised ICF Strategy, covering the period 2021 until 2025, which was adopted this summer, the importance of both human rights and gender aspects in climate finance activities has been elevated.

This means that all ICF funding is conditional on showing that **applicants observe the “do no harm” and the precautionary (prevention rather than cure) principles**, comply with leading human rights and gender equality standards; and engage actively with relevant stakeholders, including: people marginalized and/or potentially discriminated against due to their sexual orientation, race or color; indigenous peoples; and other local communities.

Luxembourg is committed to ensure that its funding meets the criteria of delivering on international development goals pertaining to gender issues such as promoting gender equality and empowering girls and women. Therefore, applicants must not only themselves aim to promote gender equality within their organizations but also strongly **integrate gender considerations within the project/program proposal**. As part of the selection process, applications will be assessed against the robustness of the gender-sensitive indicators proposed and the prospect of the measure to perform successfully.

In addition, the multi-year **budget forecast** for Luxembourg’s ICF envelope includes a **sub-heading “Gender Equality and Human Rights”** aimed at promoting both topics in the context of climate change. Finally, gender mainstreaming is also a priority in **Cooperation activities**, where three **cross-cutting priorities** are systematically taken into account. These are human rights, gender equality and environmental sustainability.

### Challenges

The challenges often are of **technical nature**. For instance, in ICF activities, Luxembourg often has to rely on the gender- and human rights expertise of external experts or partner organisations, who implement the projects. This is mainly due to a **lack of human resources** and a **lack of in-house expertise**.

Thankfully, implementing partners are very much up to speed on this topic and share the same concerns when it comes to gender equality. Therefore, the Ministry of the Environment, Climate and Sustainable Development (MECSD) **engaged in specific climate change & gender or climate change & human rights projects** aimed at making this intention more concrete, e.g.:

- Data collection for the identification of gender gaps and establishment of priority lines of work across sectors that deal with climate change in Chile, through a partnership with UNDP.
- Awareness raising of the human rights and climate change nexus through ICF support to the Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL), which produces high-quality reports on this topic on a regular basis and also hosts events (e.g. COP side-events) to that effect, and thereby increases the collective technical knowledge on the topic.

It is worth pointing out that while great streaks have been made on the gender front, **the topic of human rights and climate change as such, and specifically, is relatively new**. As such, in the context of the discussions on the 2030 Agenda, it has sometimes been challenging to **get all ministries on board** immediately to concretely address this. However, there seems to be an increased uptake of this intersectional topic. The MECSD has started **building more internal capacity** to further drive this

rights-based approach to (climate/sustainability) policy-making and sees a reflection thereof in other ministries. Luxembourg is therefore ready and eager to keep pushing the agenda in this space.