

# STATEMENT

## **Inter-American and international institutions call on States to ensure equal participation of women in decision-making throughout the COVID-19 crisis.**

The undersigned institutions, members of the Inter-American Task Force on Women's Leadership, express their concern regarding the low integration of the gender perspective and women's leadership in response to the social and economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, and call on States and decision-makers to consider the equal incorporation of women at all levels of decision-making in response to this crisis. Only with this equal participation can we ensure the central consideration of the differentiated impacts of the pandemic on the life and well-being of women and men.

The underrepresentation participation of women in leadership positions in public sphere influences the way in which the specific needs of women are addressed. Decisions that minimize or do not consider gender-differentiated impacts not only affect the quality of life and health of women, but also affect that of their dependent persons, whether they are children, older persons or people with disabilities or illness.

There is global recognition of the importance of incorporating gender equality in responses to emergencies and disasters. Evidence from multiple areas suggests that parity in decision-making has resulted in greater plurality in approaching problems and better proposed solutions. The participation of women, their leadership and the breadth of their perspectives show that there are no gender neutral policies and that the perspective and specific needs and interests of half the population must have their own voice, which is even more fundamental in managing this crisis.

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It is essential that women's voices are present and heard at decision-making tables to effectively respond to the global pandemic caused by the COVID-19. This crisis can also be a moment of transformation and an opportunity to challenge traditional political, economic and social dynamics, recognizing the experience of women in protecting the health of families and communities, and adding their perspectives and its contributions at an unprecedented juncture that calls for inclusive and equal leadership at all levels.

We call on governments, especially the health sector, as well as the private sector, parliaments, and other organizations linked to the economic management of the crisis, to ensure that women have a central role in responses to COVID-19.

