

# Qualitative Research Report

30th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP30)

**COP30 - UNFCCC**  
COP-30 Series

For Women, For the Climate:  
Gender, Entrepreneurship,  
and Climate Justice

**SEBRAE**

Brazilian Micro and Small  
Business Support Service

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH REPORT

**FOR THEM, FOR THE CLIMATE:  
GENDER, ENTREPRENEURSHIP, AND CLIMATE JUSTICE**

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## Context of the study:

COP-30 represents a historic opportunity for Brazil to lead global climate debates, articulating climate justice, just transition, and gender equality. Studies show that climate change disproportionately affects vulnerable girls and women, particularly under poverty and inequality. On the other hand, female leaders have stood out in the construction of sustainable solutions. They account for almost half of such projects in Brazil, greatly tending to integrate environmental criteria into their decisions.

Meeting the targets of the new Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) — reducing emissions by 2035 (from 59% to 67% less) — requires an inclusive and collaborative approach. Sebrae plays a strategic role in this scenario, mobilizing efforts to develop skills focused on sustainability, encourage green entrepreneurship, and promote a business environment that recognizes and supports the specificities of small businesses in the transition to a low-carbon economy.

Thus, expanding women's leading role in climate action constitutes a matter of social justice and a strategic imperative to achieve national goals and consolidate the Brazilian position as a global leader on the subject.

## Objectives:

- To understand the perceptions of female leaders engaged in the climate agenda about the role and contribution of female entrepreneurship to the just transition;
- To map barriers, opportunities, and factors that enhance the positive impact of women-led initiatives for climate mitigation and adaptation actions;
- To collect experiences, suggestions, and recommendations from leaders on how Sebrae and its partners can expand and adapt their support for the work of women entrepreneurs in all their diversity in climate justice;
- To gain insights to formulate innovative approaches that integrate climate justice, just transition, and gender equality.

## Key Question:

- How can the protagonism of women entrepreneurs, in all their diversity, be enhanced to generate innovative and sustainable solutions to climate challenges and the just transition?

## Supplementary questions:

- What barriers and opportunities shape the role of female leaders in climate mitigation and adaptation agendas?
- What strategies and policies can integrate climate justice, just transition, and gender equality in fostering the work of women entrepreneurs in an innovative and sustainable way?
- What role can Sebrae play, as a key actor, in strengthening the role of women entrepreneurs in the climate agenda?

## Target audience:

National and international female leaders working in: civil society organizations (NGOs, foundations, advocacy networks), public organizations linked to the climate agenda and sustainable development, think-tanks and applied research institutions, and academia (professors and researchers in climate, gender, and sustainable development).

## Methodology:

In-depth qualitative research with semi-structured interviews via an online platform, ensuring national and international reach. Data were collected in September 2025, totaling 14 interviews.

## Application of the results:

- To subsidize Sebrae policies, programs, and actions that integrate gender, entrepreneurship, and climate justice;
- To guide the work by Sebrae to expand the impact of women entrepreneurs in all their diversity on the climate agenda.

## Interviewees' profile

- **Academia:** Renowned researchers who have worked for more than 20 years in public universities and who configure national and international references in sustainable consumption, ecological economy, and socio-biodiversity in the Pan-Amazon and Cerrado.
- **Circular economy:** A pioneer in Brazil on the subject and consultant awarded by UNESCO, she has 15 years of experience and co-founded an association of women in circular economy.

- **Amazonian civil society:** A specialist with 25 years of experience in socio-environmental policies, leadership in national councils and in the Climate Observatory, she works with Indigenous peoples, quilombolas, and extractivists to protect territories and cultures.
- **International organization:** An economist with a PhD in climate change, more than 30 projects in environmental economics, and leadership in technical cooperation and global and national sustainable policymaking.
- **Young leadership in energy:** Founder of a women's initiative in the energy sector and a climate specialist at CIF – Climate Investment Funds, she has received awards from Forbes Under 30 and Reuters. She has a career in the Inter-American Development Bank, the United Nations, and Sustainable Energy for All.
- **Pantanal and biomes:** A co-founder of a socio-environmental organization and policy coordinator of an international organization, she has 20 years of experience in gender equality and territorial rights in Pantanal and other biomes.
- **Global South think-tank:** She has a PhD in International Relations and coordinates a climate research and cooperation center focused on the Global South, working on inclusive governance and evidence-based public policies.
- **Young Black woman:** An international advisor in a reference organization, she is a specialist in climate and racial justice, a researcher of urban peripheries and quilombos, and an emerging voice on climate, gender, and race.
- **Amazonian Indigenous woman:** President of an Amazonian research and development civil society organization, she leads a network of 600 organizations in the Legal Amazon, a national reference in the defense of forest peoples and riverine women.
- **Sustainable finance executive:** A counsellor in an international female network on climate and in environmental, social, and governance sustainability (ESG), she has a career in banking and international recognition in social and environmental impact.
- **Democracy and gender:** Co-founder of an organization that strengthens women in politics and public management, she is a specialist in political ecology, human rights, and social justice and has international experience.
- **Justice and human rights:** Lawyer and director of an international civil society organization, she specializes in women's rights and equity, with a strong global presence in councils and chairs on social and climate justice.
- **Feminist Amazonian Indigenous woman:** A founder of an organization focused on women in the Amazon and an activist since the 1970s, she is a reference in the articulation of Indigenous women's movements in the Legal Amazon.

# Results

## 1. Profile: interviewees' trajectories

*Climate, gender, and entrepreneurship: how did they connect with the agenda?*

The interviewees connected themselves to the climate justice and gender agenda in different ways despite points of convergence in which individual trajectories were linked to these themes.

### 1) From outside with the institutional/economic axis

These profiles arrived at this agenda via institutional paths focused on economics (financial education, microcredit, green industrial policies, gender affirmative programs and actions, care infrastructure, etc.). These trajectories focused on changing the rules of the game, scaling public policies, projects, public notices, financial instruments, diversity, and climate goals to account for this agenda.

**How do you articulate these themes today?** Their work aims to create training trails for women and articulate intersectoral arrangements with the public sector, companies, universities, and civil society by using metrics beyond carbon, such as parity, decent wage, inclusion in chains, etc. They seek scale by public notices, indicators, and governance, maintaining diversity criteria.

### 2) From outside with territorial immersion

This profile includes trajectories that began outside the territory, transforming and connecting themselves to local agendas by territorial immersion and continuous presence in communities. The focus lies on looking at local governance and listening to traditional knowledge, rejecting top-down models, and emphasizing the need for languages anchored in the local and long-term policies. This profile measures the impact of actions aimed at the gender and climate transition agenda by indicators such as permanence in the territory, well-being, and local institutions strengthening.

**How do you articulate these themes today?** Articulate gender, climate justice, and entrepreneurship from local life: active listening, community protocols, traditional know-how technologies, short chains, and remuneration for care.

### 3) Originating from the territory - identity and practices anchored in the local

Trajectories that began in ways of life and territorial identities (Indigenous, riverine, Amazonian) from the ground of the territory. Connections were born from community experience and contact with traditional knowledge. The focus lies on care

networks and socio-biodiversity, non-monetary economics, and associative management. Politics, for this profile, must be born “from within.”

**How do you articulate these themes today?** They demand legal recognition of local organizational forms, protection against violence, access to markets without intermediaries, and a State presence with continuity. They articulate climate justice as autonomy and permanence, operating with ancestral knowledge as a social technology and measuring impact by community institutional strengthening and productive diversity.

The similarities between the trajectories are clear regarding guiding concepts:

- Gender structures the climate agenda. Race and territory are also necessary.
- Solutions gain strength if rooted in the territory. Listening to traditional knowledge and practices is important. Even those profiles that operate via policies and financial institutions recognize that solutions must be coordinated and make sense in the territory.
- Enabling conditions: it is necessary to provide care infrastructure and conditions that ensure that women have time to work.
- Policies must be followed by continuous and accessible financing (from microcredit to public procurement or community philanthropy)
- Metrics must go beyond carbon, including well-being, non-monetary income, and diversity.
- Real inclusion: voice and parity for women in the justice and climate transition agendas, real decision-making power.
- Continuity: long-term programs and actions rather than one-off actions.

Above all, the differences refer to the starting point of each interviewee and the weight they give to the instruments that may leverage the gender equality and climate justice agenda. In summary, interviewees’ connection with climate justice, just transition, and gender came from several paths that converge in the idea that climate neither exists without equity nor effective politics without territorial roots; that women must have time, voice, space, income, care support, and networks. Policies must associate knowledge, technology, and financing with traditional and community ways of life that keep people and ecosystems standing.

## 2. The leading role of women in the climate agenda

### *Women’s role in the just climate transition*

For the interviewees, women constitute the main operators of territory-focused just transition as they transform care activities, local knowledge, and traditional

technologies into solutions. However, for this to happen, they need structural conditions, such as support regarding time, care infrastructure, access to financial resources, networks, and operational support.

- These women are protagonists of territory-based solutions as they connect local and even ancestral knowledge to current needs, including climate justice and transition, with economic and viable solutions, such as agroecology actions, selective collection, solar energy, etc. This entrepreneurship, if called that way, is fundamentally collective, via associations, networks, cooperatives, whose success is also measured by non-monetary aspects.
- They lead care networks, organize the logistics of daily life, and create social infrastructures that can keep people in the territory during times of crisis.
- They translate practical life and the world of technologies in low income and restricted access to infrastructure contexts, increasing the adherence of outside policies and programs and producing results that reduce inequalities.
- When they occupy leadership and decision-making spaces, they fight for rights agendas, expand the plurality of solutions, and push for affirmative action, parity, and diversity so the agenda is also fair regarding power and voice for minorities. Examples show that leading women argue that effective solutions require a diversity of arrangements, languages, and success indicators based on territory and context, subverting the logic of standardized solutions.
- They act as educators, training other women.
- They are vectors of inclusive innovation: in their entrepreneurial endeavors, they combine the economic issue with socio-environmental aspects, respecting the environment and the context and generating local innovative solutions with economic value. When they have access to credit, they boost green industries, improving productivity with greater social return and lower environmental impact.

*“I think there is a fundamental contribution of female entrepreneurship and female leadership in the economic field: the development of businesses that generate not only financial value but social and environmental value for society (...) women’s work has a very fundamental contribution to this just transition debate because they also have this role of caring as this discussion of the care economy crosses the just transition debate; an economy that receives scarce visibility and consideration in the GDP of countries.”* **JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

*“Women have offered solutions since time immemorial. They also are the great providers of these solutions. We have data that indicate that women contribute about 1/3 of the world workforce in agriculture, for example, but that they represent only 12% in terms of land ownership. Only 12% of landowners are women even though they are a significant contingent of the workforce. So, although women are often disproportionately responsible for ensuring food security, family care, essential resources such as water, etc. — that is, they are active agents in terms of*

*providing these essential resources —, in some territories and in some contexts, they are still not treated in this way.”* **GLOBAL SOUTH THINK-TANK**

*“Today one of our biggest focuses (including what we think is our biggest contribution to the debate that will take place around COP) is exactly to help give visibility in a very concrete way to the contributions of these traditional peoples and communities regarding the climate problem, social technologies, and ways of coping. In this role, I think that the gender issue, the importance of women’s participation, is fundamental because I think that even philosophically, there is the carelessness policy of at the bottom of this problem. We are experiencing the effects of policies that have never looked at the other and thought about dynamics and development from an inclusive logic. I think that, whether you like it or not, given everything history has shown us, this is something that has been well valued by women in a way that in general it is not. So, it is increasingly evident for us that there is no solution that does not involve a space for women’s participation, advocacy, leadership.”* **AMAZONIAN CIVIL SOCIETY**

*“The Amazon is a cultivated forest, a forest that is the result of traditional agricultural systems and management by Indigenous peoples and traditional communities. So, today we see that the discourse to conserve forests is often ‘we must conserve the forests for the Indigenous peoples.’ No, we must ensure the ways of life of Indigenous peoples so that the forest exists and is conserved because the forest depends on these traditional management systems. In all societies, of course, there are many historical, cultural roles of women within these production systems (seed collection and breeding, gardens...) that guarantee this diversity.”* **AMAZONIAN CIVIL SOCIETY**

#### *Examples of initiatives led by women*

- Community adaptation plans in Recife (Ibura/Caranguejo Tabaiaries): women lead risk mapping with drones, low-cost rain gauges, and vegetable gardens in vulnerable areas.
- Topia Negra (Amapá): a collective led by black women which installed a septic tank solution and access to water in a public school in partnership with Embrapa.
- Agroforestry and terreiros food (São Paulo): women from traditional and religious communities structure urban agroecology for food security, water, and the microclimate.
- Seed networks and Indigenous adaptation plans (Amazon): female leaders conduct diagnoses, form networks, and implement climate plans.
- Network of Traditional Midwives (Acre/Amazon): maps and trains midwives and integrates territorial health, including river-based care.
- Aquarela Pantanal (MS/MT): women at the head of community nurseries produce seedlings for restoration and monitoring.

- Registry of Fire and Low Impact Agriculture (MS): tool built with strong female leadership for adaptive fire management that has been adopted by the state government.
- Community Solar Energy (North/Northeast Regions and State of Goiás): women's networks train in photovoltaic installation/maintenance and associative management.
- Front of Women Waste Pickers (States of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro): articulation of women's recycling cooperatives with public procurement and marketing channels.
- Sociobiodiversity Chains (Amazon Region)
- Biojewelry and Weaving with exchange between ethnicities (Amazon Region): women structure the design, production, and sale of biojewelry and traditional fabrics.
- Circular Ideia (Brazil): a women-led platform that spreads circular economy.
- Talanoa Institute / LACLIMA / Brazilian Center for Climate Justice Empower the Climate: women's advocacy and knowledge production organizations translate climate negotiations, train leaders, and guide climate justice under a gender and race perspective.
- Women in Energy (Brazil): networks of women in the energy sector focused on mentoring, visibility, and gateways into a male-dominated field.
- Itaú Entrepreneurial Woman (national, supported by the Inter-American Development Bank/International Finance Corporation): program with female leadership that integrates financial inclusion, training, and diversity metrics. It fosters women's businesses and connects credit to social and environmental outcomes.
- Indigenous leadership forums and networks: women occupy command positions in defense of territory, health, and governance.

### 3. Barriers and opportunities

#### *Obstacles that limit women's protagonism*

The obstacles and barriers that limit women's protagonism refer to unequal power structures, material and time limitations, access barriers to funding and information, and lack of effective support (care, teams, mental health). The interviewees stated that women's protagonism depends on structural conditions rather than on "individual motivation": care policies, accessible funding, mentoring networks and visibility, and an institutional context that recognizes care and local governance as innovation.

- 1) **Structural and cultural barriers that reinforce the invisibility of women in public spaces:** Patriarchy, as an organizing principle of social and

institutional practices, still structures the productive and climate fields, manifesting itself as the masculinization of decision-making spaces, in which women are minorities or have only symbolic participation rather than an effective speaking place. Lack of recognition of women's work, especially regarding reproductive care work, labor in agroecology, and community organization. These activities are still seen as assistance rather than as part of the economy. Technical and political environments with exclusionary language and a resistance to listening to women. Interviewees mention that women who lead local transition practices neither recognize themselves as entrepreneurs nor are recognized as such, which perpetuates the concentration of resources and legitimacy (impostor syndrome). Lack of references for female entrepreneurship in climate.

- 2) **Inequality of time, income, and access to resources:** Interviewees showed a strong consensus that time is a scarce resource for women and a major — if not the biggest — practical obstacle to female protagonism. Their triple shift (work, home, care economy), accentuated by the absence of care infrastructures such as day care centers, support services for older adults, health care services, etc., hinder women from participating in positions, courses, meetings, discussion spaces, among others. Thus, there stand also obstacles to financing since many public notices or credit lines require histories or guarantees that women lack as they have no time to engage in a series of activities.
- 3) **Concentration of information:** public notices, courses, credit lines, public programs, and partnerships usually circulate in closed networks— academic, governmental, or businesses that are mostly located in the Brazilian South and Southeast, excluding women from Amazonian, peripheral, and rural territories. The lack of transparency and accessible channels means that only those who are already connected to formal institutions or networks can benefit. This information asymmetry generates a “funnel effect”: few women accumulate access to projects, visibility, and funding, whereas most remain invisible.
- 4) **Legal and financial insecurity in traditional communities:** Low financial autonomy and legal uncertainty emerged as a deep obstacle to female protagonism in traditional communities since many Indigenous, riverine, quilombola, or extractivist women work in territories lacking formal property titles, which prevents access to credit, insurance, agricultural policies, public procurement, and even basic production records. Informality excludes them from economic and social protection instruments. This condition also leaves them vulnerable to land grabbing, violence, and loss of territory as the lack of legal certainty blocks their ability to invest, plan, and inherit. Interviewees emphasize that economic autonomy is only possible with territorial security and collective legal recognition, and that land regularization and access to documentation should be seen as basic policies of the just transition.

- 5) **Overload:** the absence of institutional support — administrative, technical, and psychological—transforms female protagonism into an individual burden, producing fatigue, isolation, and illness, especially in leaders who accumulate multiple functions. The lack of horizontal exchange networks also isolates women to their local fronts.
- 6) **Specific obstacles in traditional and peripheral territories:** traditional and peripheral territories show a set of structural and persistent obstacles that limit women’s protagonism. Geographical distance, precarious infrastructure, and high transportation costs hinder access to training, credit, and support networks. To this are added gender violence, territorial threats, and political delegitimization, which silence leaders and inhibit participation in decision-making spaces. Many women work with neither support from the State nor permanence policies, which keeps them dependent and vulnerable. Symbolic invitations and the occupation of spaces without real power of influence also reinforce their feeling of isolation.
- 7) **Liberal narrative around entrepreneurship,** which prevents women from seeing themselves as entrepreneurs of innovative solutions.
- 8) **Institutional racism** prevents black women from being seen as protagonists of solutions.
- 9) **Lack of networks and mentoring. Lack of representation.** Few references to women’s ventures in climate isolate women who are willing to undertake them. The low representativeness upholds the repetition of traditional models due to the lack of references.

*“Low representation still forces us repeat traditional models, because they are better known, and renders us poorly innovative because this low diversity continues to say: “No, that worked.” It is true that it worked, but you gave no opportunity for the other part. And we cannot miss what we do not know. So, for me, this is one of the limits.”* **SUSTAINABLE FINANCE EXECUTIVE**

*“The gender discourse is relatively reproduced, but when you look at a panel composition, event organization, or access to opportunities, people are not necessarily actually prioritizing participation. Concerned about it, I understand that we, unfortunately, still need affirmative action for this. We see many women in positions of power, but this achievement, the space to speak, to position oneself, still is under construction.”* **AMAZONIAN CIVIL SOCIETY**

*“I think we have structural challenges that end up exerting even more weight when we speak within this gender lens, within this female perspective. So, I think that first we have difficulty considering everyday experiences, the experiences of territories, female experiences, in these spaces of political decision-making.”* **GLOBAL SOUTH THINK-TANK**

*“Money is lacking, but it alone does not solve it. Technology is lacking, but it alone does not solve it. So, for me, everything always has a lot to do with the issue of governance, and I believe it is important to think that even if you are saying: “Oh, I want to support women’s entrepreneurship so that they can be managers,” that is fine. But it is not enough for her to be an entrepreneur if this support does not come with support for action, work to strengthen organizations, collectivity, women’s work, engagement in women’s networks that help empower and strengthen, that is, the perspective of policy and strengthening action, whether of women individually or of organizations.”* **AMAZONIAN CIVIL SOCIETY**

*“Financing is not the only climate justice device, but it is one that we have a certain ease of measuring, and based on this metric, we understand that this is not working equally, according to female representation. Another issue worth addressing is that women are underrepresented politically. We already know that, but they are also underrepresented in terms of the decision-making process on climate at all levels. Once again, although they are important sources of solution and leadership, most climate initiatives do not necessarily consider the experience, the demands, the knowledge of women and girls. I consider it important to also have this youth framework and recognize this participation so that solutions are addressed.* **GLOBAL SOUTH THINK-TANK**

*“Most small entrepreneurs also come from a less favored social condition, which implies material obstacles to their dedication to their businesses, one of which is poverty of time. Women have the famous triple shift. She goes to work, a shift, she takes care of the children, another shift, she takes care of the house, another shift. If there are older adults or sick people, women usually are the ones who have the burden to care for them. We use this expression for this chronic situation for women. We can measure this. Brazil is one of the countries with the least statistic data, but we can still measure it by the number of hours women dedicate to the house and the children when compared to men. Of course, this has intersectionalities because women and black women show this even more visibly. These intersectionalities are important too as they generate a material restriction, women’s poverty of time as they have no time to either dedicate themselves to business or to train themselves precisely due to this overload. Women have been socially assigned the function of taking care of the home, doing the laundry, cleaning the house, and taking care of the children.”* **INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION**

*“I think this mentoring thing is a barrier and a solution. It is a barrier for those who do not have it because I think having someone who knows you and who will support you is a matter of networks and mentorships, of people being by your side saying: ‘You have potential, you will be able to handle it, you can do it.’”* **YOUNG LEADERSHIP IN ENERGY**

*“Women face a big barrier, even when we discuss credit because the properties are often not in their names. So, it is difficult for them to offer loan guarantees. Some available lines of credit are designed for large businesses, which require large guarantees. Thus, a small economy driven by women is sometimes excluded by the bureaucratic rules that are placed and by placed demands for counterparts.”* **JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

*“The second major barrier is institutional racism, which makes it impossible for these women to be seen as protagonists of solutions, as entrepreneurial leaders of technologies*

*because it is often marked on the body of these women a place of militants, a place of whistleblowers of injustices and not promoters of solutions.”***YOUNG BLACK WOMAN**

*“I start with impostor syndrome. I think that most women have full capacity and potential but do not believe in themselves, they do dare do so. I thought a lot before giving myself such a space. I am going to found an organization because of the feeling that everything is going to go wrong. You think: ‘My business will not take off. I cannot reach enough people, folks do not believe in me.’ So many noes come before the yes, which I think demotivates us, making us not move forward.”***YOUNG ENERGY LEADERSHIP**

*“I think that a challenging obstacle still refers to exclusive cliques, this predominance of men in higher positions and events. We still lack the sensitivity to seek representation. A recent experience of the World Forum on Circular Economy was very shocking for me and for the other women in this movement: an opening ceremony in which one man spoke after another. The opening ceremony is the most important! An opening plenary that only had men.”***CIRCULAR ECONOMY**

*“I think that this place of entrepreneurship is very co-opted by liberal narratives, which often distort and make it impossible for women who are producing solutions in territories to see themselves as entrepreneurs of innovative solutions. They could be raising funds from various sources for their solutions, but this liberal narrative always sets entrepreneurship in a white, elitist urban centers, making it impossible for women to see themselves in this place.”***YOUNG BLACK WOMAN**

*“An initial challenge in the climate agenda is the absence of an explicit strategy to include women. This agenda tends to worsen gender disparities in labor markets. Massive investments in renewable energy that are not accompanied by a strategy of inserting women will continue to create disproportionately more jobs for men than for women; an agenda that is not neutral from a gender point of view.”***INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION**

*“Today many climate references in Brazil are women, but less so in female entrepreneurship. Several women are in climate. I do not see the gender issue as much in a representative way, as something as strong in the energy, infrastructure, and agriculture sectors. I think we succeeded in climate due to a very positive representation of women; but not in climate entrepreneurship as it is not seen as something for women. It is seen as a space for men.”***YOUNG LEADERSHIP IN ENERGY**

*“I think that funding is the main limitation because the resources that arrive for these solutions are often small and not continuous and disputed by thousands of community solutions in other territories that never obtain large funding to strengthen organizations in a more institutional way so they are able to provide continuous support, to pay the people who produce these solutions. Small resources, notices, and prizes are often so important for the survival of these solutions in the territories.”***YOUNG BLACK WOMAN**

*“The overload women experience because of domestic work, this double, triple shift they experience often hinder their access to information and knowledge networks to meet people who can help open doors. We also see this dimension of access to networks, a*

*barrier that contributes to making female entrepreneurship more precarious.”* **JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

*Opportunities to amplify women’s impact*

Interviewees agree on four main drivers to amplify women’s impact: i) a care infrastructure to remedy “time poverty” and enable women’s participation; ii) continuous financing; iii) training in accessible language and presence in the territory; and iv) operational support networks. The integration of actions with local governance and the establishment of goals beyond carbon are fundamental conditions for the just transition.

- **Care infrastructure:** a concrete and urgent pillar as no full participation or female protagonism can dispense with facing the “poverty of time” due to the overload with children, older adults, and domestic chores. Childcare, community centers, and psychosocial support services are seen as economic infrastructures rather than just social ones as they free productive time and enable women to continuously participate in training, networks, and policies. This view repositions care as a condition for development rather than as an individual obstacle.
- **Ongoing funding:** seen as a bottleneck and as an opportunity to expand women’s impact. Interviewees mentioned the need for multiple financial instruments with unbureaucratic flows and flexible guarantees that consider the reality of entrepreneurs without a banking history or the Brazilian national registry of legal entities. They suggested that banks and companies adopt diversity criteria and socio-environmental metrics when granting credit.
- **Practical training using accessible language and presence in the territory:** training paths that start from the local reality regarding its time, infrastructure, knowledge, practices (preferably taught by peers) so the content is of immediate use. Interviewees found the need to translate, adapt technical terms, adjust formats, and ensure material conditions so training fits women’s lives.
- **Operational support networks:** management and administration support since many community initiatives and women’s enterprises stop due to the lack of support that overloads and burns them out rather than to a lack of ideas.
- **Affirmative action in green agendas:** parity goals, diversity criteria in public notices, and seats at decision-making tables.
- **Long-term State policies:** structural policies, grounded in continuous territorial presence and formulated in partnership with women.
- **Public procurement as a mechanism of economic traction:** for women organized in cooperatives and collectives. By directing part of bids to

women's groups, the State would guarantee a stable market and income. This policy would also strengthen local chains, reduce middlemen, and transform public purchasing power into a direct instrument of economic and climate justice.

- **Legal recognition and local organizational forms:** for access to programs and credit.
- **Networked work and coordination:** enabling the dissemination and capillarization of knowledge, the exchange of expertise, and the occupation of international spaces, creating opportunities to scale solutions. Opportunity for women to connect not only with each other but with economic, political networks that can leverage their voice and their business.
- **Give visibility** for women who carry out social entrepreneurship in climate.

*"I think a very big opportunity is to give visibility. I think that some of these women are very well known in climate but not in social entrepreneurship, in the private sector, in the financial sector, or in the public sector, in the government. I think we ought to give visibility to these women's places. Sometimes, having lists, catalogs (...) Perhaps a list of women on website resources. I think this is very important because visibility is everything."* **YOUNG LEADERSHIP IN ENERGY**

*"The best experiences we have are those in which you work collectively in a territory with multiple and more general governance spaces, including networks. For example, some work involves several regions and communities. In each, we work with women's collectives, supporting and strengthening them and helping them to reach these leadership spaces in associations that were dominated by men and promoting the establishment of networks with other territories around different themes and setting this possibility of connection with other people."* **AMAZONIAN CIVIL SOCIETY**

*"Today, these women and their organizations work in many networks, which enables knowledge capillarization, knowledge exchange, and makes them visible to the authorities, including in international spaces (...) I think this is a great opportunity to scale these solutions. I also think that all the access to new knowledge these exchanges generate also enables these women to establish their solutions in a more continuous, institutionalized way."* **YOUNG BLACK WOMAN**

## 4. Strategies and innovations

*Policies, practices, and forms of support to mainstream climate justice, just transition, and gender equality*

The interviewees agree that the integration between climate justice, just transition, and gender equality begins with structuring policies: care infrastructure (comprehensive daycare centers and support for older adults and mental health) to

address “time poverty;” affirmative actions and parity goals in green programs; and legal and territorial recognition that enable women to access credit, public procurement, and social protection. This tripod — care, parity, and legal certainty — is seen as an economic policy rather than just a social one.

- **Public policies designed from community learning** and the protagonism of women.
- **Care infrastructure** as an essential economic policy to free women’s time and ensure productive and political participation.
- **Affirmative actions and parity goals** in all green and climate transition programs, with diversity indicators and accountability.
- **Just transition plans with a gender and territory perspective**, designed in a participatory way, incorporating local ways of life and economies.
- **Public procurement and tax incentives** aimed at initiatives led by women.
- **Climate vulnerability diagnostic assessments** as a mandatory starting point for policies and public notices.
- **Shared governance** involving grassroots women, local governments, universities, and the private sector in deliberative councils and forums.
- **Mapping** to find collectives and female leaders and guide resources according to the territorial reality.
- **Participatory listening methodologies** as an official instrument for policy design.
- **Permanent cross-sector hubs** that combine training, technology, and financing — replacing one-off projects with ongoing programs.
- **Participatory monitoring** with feedback to communities, using indicators that value well-being, non-monetary income, and permanence in the territory, in addition to carbon. Participatory monitoring with feedback to communities,
- **Simplified credit, microgrants, and guarantees** for women and informal collectives.
- **Hybrid financing** for productive infrastructure.
- **Innovation grants** with inclusion goals and a focus on technologies such as agroecology, solar energy, and circularity.
- **Specific lines of training and applied R&D**, connecting universities, federal institutes, and local arrangements.
- **Communication policies and climate literacy** with materials written in simple language and regional formats.
- **Intersectoral arrangements.**
- **Encourage a pro-entrepreneurship culture** that reaches the youth, establish incentives for the third sector, and strengthen junior companies.
- **Establish gender perspective** in energy transition policies. Suggestion to invest in training popular legal prosecutors to increase communities’ awareness of energy, consumption, and adaptive solutions.

*“We need to start designing public policies from the lessons these community organizations have and not from the desire and the minds of secretariat technicians. I think that this is the change we need to have policies that intersect all these agendas and guarantee women’s protagonism, a gender protagonism that is effective for the transformation we need. We have policies that currently make a good diagnosis of the role of women in territories. However, their implementation ignored this protagonism.”* **YOUNG BLACK WOMAN**

*“If we ask any well-informed leadership of women’s movement today what is their opinion of the transition from fossil fuels to clean energy? They will not even know where to start with that question since they do not even have a vague idea of what is fossil fuel. In this matter, I think there is a great deal of information work to be done, which is what we are trying to do. I have had this very strong experience over the last 30 years of legal, community, and legal empowerment, knowledge, and rights, which I think leverages more structural changes. If I had minimally continuous resources, I would invest in the large-scale training of these female popular legal prosecutors.”* **DEMOCRACY AND GENDER**

*“A condition I see as fundamental to overcome this structural barrier of poverty of time refers to a care infrastructure: more daycare and full-time centers, centers for older adults, and spaces in which the State really takes part of this load, of this time that has burdened women. I deem it a very important condition for micro and small businesses because most of these women face these challenges.”* **INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION**

*“We work with Indigenous territories, but we do not speak for it, they speak for themselves. A group of women speaks for themselves. One must provide conditions for these people to be in these spaces. Talking about formative processes includes training, which requires notebooks, books, writing, and other formative processes (other formative processes refer to orality). Such strategy must undergo changes; it is not unique; it is not simply training for Indigenous people. Indigenous people do not speak or read Portuguese. Another issue involves how to ensure training participation, people’s ability to participate. For example, a recyclable waste picker participated in a course or a debate about vulnerability. However, as she stopped picking waste for one, two, or 10 days, she had no way to support her family.”* **PANTANAL AND BIOMES**

#### *Innovative experiences of reference for Brazil*

In summary, the interviewees mentioned experiences related to two axes: institutional and financing ones and territorial and community ones. These initiatives focus on continued presence in territories, knowledge integration, and resources and power redistribution.

The examples include:

- Denmark — integrated public policies for sustainability and food: national programs for community gardens, organic agriculture, and responsible consumption.
- European Union — Green Deal and Just Transition: articulation between climate finance, professional retraining, and gender parity.

- United States of America — ecosystem supporting women in climate innovation: strong university philanthropy, research calls for female entrepreneurs.
- Women and Gender Constituency — international network of advocacy in climate negotiations, with gender monitoring in the agreements and support for delegations from the Global South.
- Ellen MacArthur Foundation — global framework to disseminate the circular economy, focusing on sustainable product training and design.
- Gender and climate innovation policies in Colombia and Chile — examples of Latin American governments that articulate gender, green finance, and local productive development.
- Aquarela Pantanal — an environmental restoration initiative that seeks to recover the Pantanal by producing and planting native seedlings, standing out for its female protagonism, training local families to produce seedlings in local nurseries.
- Registry of Fire and Low Impact Agriculture — participatory tool for adaptive fire management, created with communities and adopted by the state government in Mato Grosso do Sul.
- Community adaptation plans in Recife — local women's networks with risk mapping, vegetable gardens, and sanitation with an anti-racist focus.
- Black Utopia (State of Amapá) — Black youth and women installing ecological sanitation and water systems in public schools, with support from Embrapa.
- Network of Women in Solar Energy (States of Goiás, Maranhão, Amazonas) — renewable energy community initiatives with technical training and associative management.
- Front of Women Waste Pickers (States of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro) — articulation of women's recycling cooperatives with public procurement and visibility campaigns.
- Chains of Amazonian sociobiodiversity — *priprioca* in Cotijuba (State of Pará), oils, nuts, marquetry, and biojewelry conducted by women and traditional communities.
- Agroecology and organic production projects with women from the semi-arid region and the Amazon
- Talanoa Institute, Empower the Climate, and LACLIMA — advocacy initiatives and knowledge production on climate and gender.
- Itaú Entrepreneurial Woman — inclusive finance model with multilateral partners.
- Yanomami Leadership Forum and Indigenous Women's Networks — political articulation for autonomy and territorial protection.
- Seed networks (RCA/Redário) — governance model and exchange of knowledge between communities and organizations.

- Intersectoral productive arrangements (cooperatives + governments + committed companies) - public procurement, personal protective equipment, and marketing for waste pickers and agroextractivists.

## 5. The role of Sebrae and partnerships

### *Forms of contribution by SEBRAE*

The interviewees see Sebrae as a strategic actor to transform the climate agenda into concrete practice in women entrepreneurs' daily lives. Its central role would involve translating and capillarizing the theme, making it accessible by practical methodologies written in accessible language and presence in territories. Instead of acting in a one-off manner, Sebrae should function as a "field agent" (following the example of family health programs), bringing training, information, and technical support to communities, cooperatives, and entrepreneurs who are unable to reach the institutional levels. This territorial approximation could find profiles and needs and adapt its content to the productive reality of each context.

Another strategic contribution refers to climate literacy and technical and financial training. In interviewees' opinion, Sebrae could create integrated training paths, combining notions of sustainability, green finance, adaptation, and innovation with management, marketing, and credit tools. This training could precede financing lines, so that learning becomes a real economic opportunity. Interviewees also highlighted the need for Sebrae to act as a translator, connecting universities, federal institutes, and entrepreneurs to create appropriate technological solutions for local demands.

The interviewees also expect Sebrae to promote long-term programs rather than standalone projects that have monitoring and clear indicators that agree with themes and resources.

Another point of contribution from Sebrae would refer to mapping and connecting women's networks and sustainable enterprises with funding agencies and public policies. This mediation would enable Sebrae to structure policies, helping governments and companies to direct investments to chains led by women.

Sebrae should seek to assess territories and understand their arrangements and entrepreneurship beyond the more urban model. One interviewee criticizes Sebrae's advertisements promoting training programs. In her view, training is framed as something offered to those who are "unskilled" which is often not the case for many communities, for example, in the Amazon, that possess their own knowledge systems, know-how, and internal practices.

Finally, the interviewees point out that Sebrae can catalyze equity and innovation if it adopts a transversal gender approach. This includes incorporating diversity criteria into public notices, offering operational and legal support to entrepreneurs, and recognizing care as a productive dimension, supporting care infrastructures.

*"Sebrae could first offer greater capillarity and mapping, a cartography of women entrepreneurs in the Amazon Region, to then establish partnerships with civil society organizations. This remains a gap in Sebrae. Establishing this partnership is paramount*

because, after all, we are there in our territories, at the forefront.” **AMAZONIAN INDIGENOUS WOMAN**

“In the private business sector still prevails this view of seeing impact in terms of number, whereas people who work with climate are talking about qualitative, transformative, and long-term impacts. We do not care about necessarily working with large numbers. There is also this vision of climate change and mitigation. Much funding targets ideas like this in energy, which gives you some idea of emission reduction. However, people forget that training people who will think about these solutions is as important because you have a lot of potential that ends up not being used for not being valued, including training, technical assistance, teaching women to believe in themselves. This has such great value. How can I explain this kind of thing? I see Sebrae as a vector of transformation in this sense of not only being a space to teach these types of variables (which in the world of entrepreneurship are so clear to those who aim for profit) but to try to rethink them in a more transformational way.” **YOUNG LEADERSHIP IN ENERGY**

“You need to have different languages, different in the sense that it is one thing to work with urban people, another with riverine individuals. There are different nuances for each segment. (...) My conception of Sebrae was very much specific training for the market. These entrepreneurs are beyond the market.” **PANTANAL AND BIOMES**

“I think Sebrae must offer opportunities only for women; opportunities, notices, courses, events (...) only for female entrepreneurs. Tag your friends. I think there is a lack of this calling because women do not understand themselves as entrepreneurs.” **YOUNG LEADERSHIP IN ENERGY**

“I think there is one thing that is important, which is time and understanding of local logics and the development of a certain flexibility to meet those demands. I think that I might not be that familiar with SEBRAE but what I keep imagining is that it may be necessary in some cases to expand a little the range of alternatives in terms of methodologies and models you use so you have a more diverse repertoire that is more apt to be adapted to each reality. The truth is that there is no solution at scale, and solutions that are very good and work well in a certain environment (sometimes closer to an urban area, with better infrastructure) will not work otherwise. I think that the overall notion is the following: the climate crisis resulted from a development model that tends to destroy diversity to hegemonize landscapes, that is, to produce only a few items. For this reason, I am convinced that the solution to the climate issue is diversity, it is to resume a perspective of diversity. So, the solution will never be a one-size-fits-all solution.” **AMAZONIAN CIVIL SOCIETY**

“I think that what [SEBRAE] would have to do is disseminate knowledge. This would mean making a cooperation agreement with some organizations in the 27 units of Sebrae across Brazil to achieve this in networks of family farming, popular legal promoters, community health agents (...) and to make a training program that involves the reasons the climate is changing, what are the structural factors, what solutions we have to try to face this and how we can engage individually and collectively in our community.” **DEMOCRACY AND GENDER**

“I think that training would be fundamental for climate literacy. SEBRAE could play a crucial role. We need macro changes. We would thus have a series of proposals toward this. For example, how do we simplify access (the procedures) to endure access to climate finance,

such as climate, adaptation, loss and damage funding, etc. On the other hand, we also need training so people can really understand what the climate crisis is, how the climate crisis affects them, and what mechanisms they have.” **GLOBAL SOUTH THINK-TANK**

“Communities often already have the answers. It has been very interesting how we have been realizing how communities adapt very efficiently because they know the reality of their territory since they often have no one else (including the State) depending on their location. So, they really invent creative solutions to account for climate adaptation to try to respond to the way in which the climate makes their lives difficult, challenges their lives. So, how can this, for example, be placed as a successful example within this public policy program? How can this be used, can be funded, can be placed within the framework of policies whether of municipal, state, federal governments, etc.” **GLOBAL SOUTH THINK-TANK**

“Some transformations are already unstoppable, notably in sustainability and the digital field in which SEBRAE can play a strategic role and map these businesses of the future, types of gaps, and how it can support these ventures, focusing on women led by women so they can take advantage of these opportunities of prosperous and sustainable business models, which will certainly have abundant opportunities in the future, especially as a result of COP 30.” **INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION**

“The climate crisis affects people differently, especially those in more vulnerable conditions in Brazil and in other countries as well, when additional layers of inequality are taken into account — whether related to race, ethnicity, class, income, or territory. These people understand the solutions they need. I come from a perspective of international cooperation, in which I saw several projects go wrong, a lot of money that goes to inapplicable solutions; solutions that we think about inside an office without consulting with the communities. A very strong thing that has happened in recent years in Brazil, especially after the pandemic, has really been this movement of communities and organizations being at the forefront of finding solutions for their territories. Most of the time, democratizing access to information in view of the issue of climate justice, which is a very important thing. In climate it becomes a bubble. I think that only those who study such PhD subjects will have access to this. And it is very important to translate this to all groups in a democratic way.” **YOUNG LEADERSHIP IN ENERGY**

#### *Partnerships to enhance women’s impact on the climate agenda*

The interviewees see partnerships as the main way to consolidate the just transition: governments would guarantee policies and permanence; whereas companies and banks, resources and technology; civil society, legitimacy and capillarity; and international organizations, scale and exchange. Sebrae is seen as the articulating node that connects these actors, translating global agendas into local solutions.

- **Partnerships with federal, state, and municipal governments:** to implement public policies for the just transition under a gender and territory perspective; to integrate Sebrae into sustainable public procurement programs; to work with the Brazilian Ministry of Women, Ministry of Development, Industry and Foreign Trade, Ministry of Environment, and Ministry of Science and Technology to create credit lines and green training; to partner with city halls to ensure territorial

presence, access to infrastructure, and ongoing support programs; and to cooperate with land and legal regularization in traditional communities.

- **Partnerships with the private and financial sector:** to create investment and microcredit funds for women-led green businesses; for cooperation with public and private banks for credit lines with flexible guarantees and gender/climate targets; for partnerships with companies committed to environmental, social, and governance and circularity to include female entrepreneurs in supply chains; to support business institutes and corporate philanthropy for technical training and mentoring; and to integrate corporate social responsibility programs to incubate women's programs and projects.
- **Partnerships with civil society and territorial networks:** to work with networks of Indigenous, quilombola, waste picker, riverine, and peripheral women to strengthen community governance; to cooperate with NGOs and local institutes toward training and regional articulation; to support socio-biodiversity networks; to partner with universities, federal institutes, and Sistema S to bring appropriate R&D and technological solutions to the territory; and to develop a set of community protocols and participatory methodologies.
- **Partnerships with international and multilateral organizations:** for technical and financial cooperation with UN Women, the United Nations Development Programme, the Inter-American Development Bank, the International Finance Corporation, the European Union, and the Women & Gender Constituency/United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change; access to global climate funds and international funds for women's adaptation and mitigation endeavors; the exchange of regional good practices on just transition and gender; and participation in global networks of sustainable finance and circular economy.
- **Public-Community Partnerships:** cooperation of public bodies with community organizations.
- **Other partnerships:** funding and creation of permanent training cross-sectoral hubs; partnerships to map women's collectives and green enterprises; partnerships to disseminate and communicate agendas (such as campaigns, catalogs, etc.); partnerships for long-term technical cooperation agreements, replacing short projects with structuring programs with metrics and monitoring.

*“Policies must be led by communities and increase trust in cooperation, organization, and the government, not only in the private sector. Even community organizations teach a lot to the private sector about relationships with territories and the subjectivities of the territories that are often not captured by private capital. Today, we have several different*

*models of public-private partnerships, but we have few models of public-community partnerships that consider the state and the communities.”***YOUNG BLACK WOMAN**

## 6. Final recommendations

*Central recommendations to guide future policies and programs*

- **Governing with women and their territories** — not just for them. The interviewees recommended that policies and programs be designed and decided with women from urban, rural, and traditional peoples/communities, recognizing community protocols and the times of the territory; moving from consultation to co-management with deliberative councils, participatory budgeting, and clear feedback; and replacing one-off projects with long-term programs anchored in local organizations.
- **Care infrastructure as an economic policy:** treating comprehensive daycare centers, care for older adults, and psychosocial support as the productive infrastructure that solves “time poverty” and enables women’s presence in training, leadership spaces, networks, and markets. Without this, the green transition reproduces inequalities: policies must finance and operate care services in which the initiatives take place, including with compatible schedules and logistics.
- **Plural, continuous, and unbureaucratic financing:** create multiple instruments — microcredit, “microgrants,” territorial funds, community philanthropy, public financing lines linked to gender and climate goals — with flexible guarantees and agile flow, including for informal collectives.
- **Training with accessible language:** offer climate literacy with accessible language, presence in the territory, and peers teaching peers. Connect external and strategic actors to the territory.
- **Public procurement and market access as a driver of fair scale:** use the purchasing power of the State to attract cooperatives and women’s collectives under diversity and fair price criteria. Support marketing channels that reduce middlemen and consolidate local income — including with territorial seals.
- **Legal certainty and territorial recognition:** advance in land regularization, recognition of associations and networks, and protection against violence and harassment so that women can plan, invest, and inherit. Territorial security is seen as a precondition for economic autonomy.
- **Metrics beyond carbon:** measure success by parity, equal pay, decent wage, well-being, trained participation, and permanence in the territory — in addition to carbon.
- Develop models that consider **public-community partnerships**.
- **Sebrae as a translator and facilitator of partnerships:** Sebrae is expected to translate the agenda into the daily lives of small businesses; map women and chains; and enable partnerships between governments, companies, civil society,

and international organizations. Sebrae should also be able to operate permanent hubs that integrate training, technology, financing, and showcases and ensure continuous and scalable projects focusing on gender, race, and territory.

## Research Teams

### **Leadership and Implementation**

*The qualitative research FOR THEM, FOR THE CLIMATE: Gender, Entrepreneurship, and Climate Justice was led by the Strategy and Transformation Unit of Sebrae Nacional, in collaboration with the Women's Entrepreneurship, Diversity, and Inclusion Unit and the International Advisory Unit, in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Brazil.*

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