

# Gender equality, employment and green transition: policies for inclusive development

## Guatemala in the «Fair transition energy and green job creation» study

COUNTRY  
**GUATEMALA**



Guatemala is one of the countries with the greatest interest in making a fair transition process in the short and medium term, given the climate vulnerability that the country suffers from phenomena such as prolonged droughts (in the so-called Dry Corridor) and torrential rains, on the other hand, the large socio-economic gap that affects the population in general, and particularly virulent indigenous women and rural areas. The country signed the Paris Agreement in 2016, with several updates to its NDC and Development Action Plans since then, such as the recent NDP K'atun Nuestra Guatemala 2032, where the environmental vision and fair transition and creation of decent employment are integrated with the closing of gaps and inequalities based on sex, ethnicity and territory. In this regard, the country has made important progress in the fight for gender equality by developing specific legislation against violence, trafficking and for the promotion and development of women. There are also Gender Units in various public bodies and several Action Plans for Equity and Equality have been developed, which recently integrated environmental aspects. The creation of green jobs is still an issue that lacks extensive practical application, although there are studies and research developed in the academic field (Rafael Landívar University, IARNA, ASIES) the need for a change in production model in the agricultural sector, which employs almost one third of the labour force and has great potential for green employment. The United Nations and its agencies have also promoted studies on the potential for creating green jobs in Guatemala, with analyses of fair transition in sectors of interest to the national economy.

### 1. Public Policy Review

#### 1.1. National policies for a just and energy transition

\* [National Development Policy K'atun Nuestra Guatemala 2032](#): developed in 2014, is the guiding guide that articulates the long-term national development policy in Guatemala, setting objectives, actions, Follow-up and institutional mandates to achieve a cross-cutting development that integrates gender approaches, integration of indigenous women, introduction of sustainable practices in agriculture and the creation of systems that improve the sustainability and resilience of the economy.

\* [National Decent Work Policy 2017-2032](#): coinciding with the objectives of the National Development Plan, focuses on labour, population, competitive and economic aspects and in defining implementation plans to address employment generation, increasing formality, the creation of enterprises and the development of human capital. It incorporates approaches

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to both sustainability and gender inclusion and equity.

\* [National Climate Change Policy](#): presented in 2009 as a general framework and justification for the need to have plans and strategies that mitigate the effects of climate change in Guatemala, defining the foundations, objectives, areas and intended scope in line with Guatemalan national legislation and the international agreements reached. While it does not mention fair transition or green employment, it lays the foundation for changing the economic and productive model in the country that now enables the creation of just transition and green employment plans and programmes.

\* [Energy Policy 2013-2027](#): planning of the energy development of Guatemala with approaches to sustainable and environmentally responsible development, but also to improve competitiveness and strengthen infrastructure. Plans to boost renewable energy and training in environmental technologies to create sustainable and climate-resilient jobs, as well as the reduction of polluting energy sources and the adoption of alternatives to wood for fuel in households and industries.

### 1.2. Planning tools and instruments

\* [Nationally Determined Contribution Guatemala \(NDC\)](#): this



document contains the country's commitment to the objectives assigned in the 2015 Paris Agreement; the last updated version of Guatemala dates from 2022. Defines the geographical, environmental, economic, social and climatic conditions of the country, as well as the concrete actions carried out to affirm transversal themes such as just transition, gender or indigenous peoples.

\* [Guatemala's Gender and Climate Change Action Plan](#): linked to the NDC and its priority objectives, develops a detailed analysis of the situation of women in Guatemala by age, origin, origin and training, among others, carrying out gender-disaggregated analyses in priority economic sectors and proposing a system of implementing measures based on a relationship between objectives, actions, indicators and responsible institutions.

\* [Articulated Agenda of Mayan, Garifuna and Xinka women](#):

document developed in 2010 by the Office for the Defence of Indigenous Women which seeks to serve as a reference for the inclusion of indigenous women in plans, Government programmes and actions aimed at gender equality and the economic and social empowerment of women. Contains specific strategies for environmental sustainability and fair transition in agricultural work and productive financing.

\* [Strategy to incorporate gender considerations in climate change in support of the Determined National Contribution \(NDC\)](#): document developed in 2020 by MARN in collaboration with UNDP to define specific actions aimed at meeting the SDGs and the Paris Agreement through the NDC, with emphasis on climate change mitigation and adaptation by Guatemalan women.

\* [National Climate Change Action Plan](#): launched by the CNCC and SEGEPLAN in 2016, defines the concrete actions to be carried out

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to comply with the 2009 National Climate Change Policy and recent legislation (Decree 7-2013) on mitigation and reduction of climate impact. It serves as a guide to institutions for the elaboration of sectoral plans and actions to adapt the Guatemalan economy and society to climate effects, thus bearing weight in the current process of just transition and green job creation with a gender approach.

**\* Financial Support Policy for the Economic Empowerment of Women Entrepreneurs and/or Owners of micro and small enterprises with resources from the "MIPYME Development Fund":** Trust fund for women-led enterprises approved by MINECO in 2024, which provides loans to Guatemalan women entrepreneurs and leaders of priority sectors such as agro-industry, crafts or industry. These are precisely the sectors identified in the NDC and the Development Plans as essential for a just transition and as potential generators of green jobs.

**\* National System for Equity between Men and Women:** rationalizing framework and follow-up and monitoring of public policies for the development of women in line with PND K'atun 2032, developed by the Presidential Secretariat for Women - SEPREM in 2019.

**\* Gender Units:** present in many of the ministries of the Government of Guatemala and responsible for

advising on a gender approach and inclusion to the bodies in which they are registered.

### 1.3. Inclusion of the gender dimension in public policies

Guatemala has made significant progress in integrating gender and sustainability approaches into the formulation of public policies for the country's socio-economic development. Concern for the adverse effects of climate and the fight against inequality have been two of the main pillars that have characterized policies and action plans over the last decade. Recently, the gender dimension has made its way into the formulation of public policies and action plans, occupying a pre-eminent place among the sustainable and just development goals that Guatemala has set itself as a goal for the coming decades. Key strategies for integrating women into the just transition model and green job creation include:

- ▶ Establishment of a specific policy that links equity and gender equality with environmental adaptation needs in line with the international commitments made by the country.
- ▶ Operationalization of a National System for Equity that oversees and controls the inclusion and implementation of gender approaches and programmes.
- ▶ Inclusion of indigenous Mayan, Garifuna and Xinka women in

gender, employment and climate change policies and action plans through a specific agenda.

- ▶ Existence of gender-specific units operating in various public ministries.

## 2. Analysis of opportunities and potential

### 2.1. Identification of policies that promote the employment of women in green jobs

Since an employment policy specifically referring to green jobs has not yet been defined, there is no specific reference to the integration of women into the labour market in this sector. However, policies, plans and public resources are available to achieve women's economic empowerment, their work and pay equalization with men, and the creation of sustainable and environmentally friendly employment. These policies, which favour the integration of women into working life, are:

- ▶ **National Decent Employment Policy 2017-2032.**
- ▶ **Energy Policy 2013-2027.**
- ▶ **Guatemala's Gender and Climate Change Action Plan.**
- ▶ **Financial Support Policy for the Economic Empowerment of Women Entrepreneurs and/or Owners of micro and small enterprises with resources from the "Development Fund for SMEs" trust.**

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### 2.2. Recommendations to improve the inclusion of gender in public policies

Although Guatemala is well advanced in the formulation of public policies for development, including gender-sensitive strategies and action plans, prevention of climate change effects and energy transformation and adaptability, The national authorities themselves (MARN) have expressed that the country needs a National Circular Economy Policy that fits in with other public policies aligned with the PND Katun 2032. The potential development of such a policy could be tapped to include specific references to green job creation and an anticipation of new job creation and labour market integration of women as a result of the implementation of such policies.

To advance gender mainstreaming and a just transition, it is recommended:

Develop a National Circular Economy Policy integrating a gender approach that includes educational,

social and financial aspects of job creation for Guatemalan women based on circular economy dynamics, introducing the concept of green jobs and circular-based green job creation targets disaggregated by gender.

### Practices to highlight

- **Guatemala's Gender and Climate Change Action Plan** as a reference framework for taking concrete measures with a full gender focus in the mitigation of climate impacts among women in aspects such as the economy and the labor and social sphere.
- **National System for Equity between Men and Women**, which allows specialized and direct management of gender-specific policies and gender approaches in public policies, as well as institutional coordination and harmonization to follow the same line of action.

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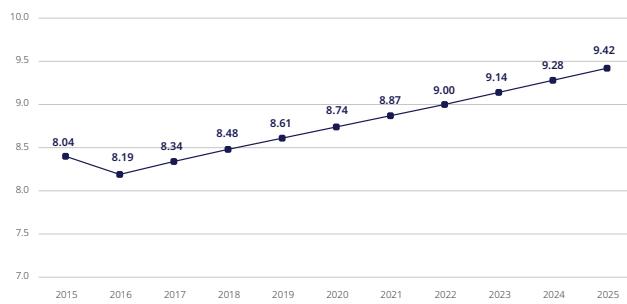
### 3. Statistical data

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##### A. Demographic data

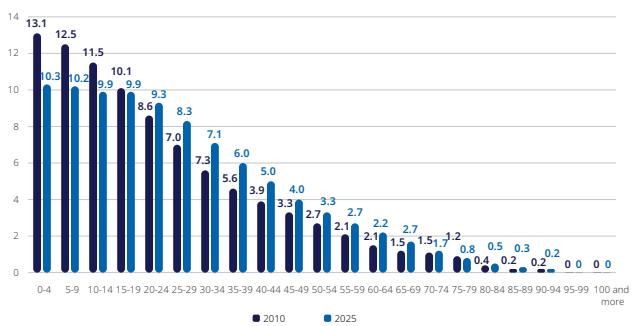
###### Population distribution statistics

###### Number of woman, millions

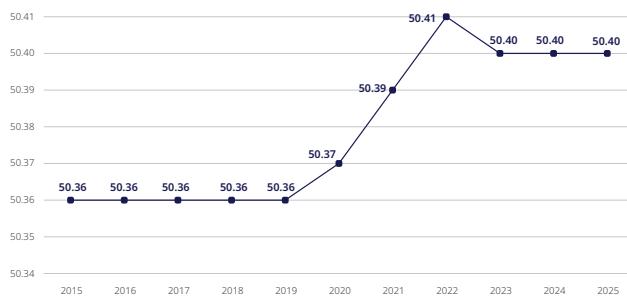


###### Age distribution statistics

###### Age distribution of the female population

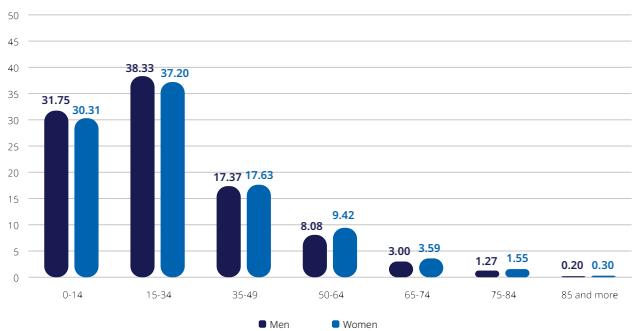
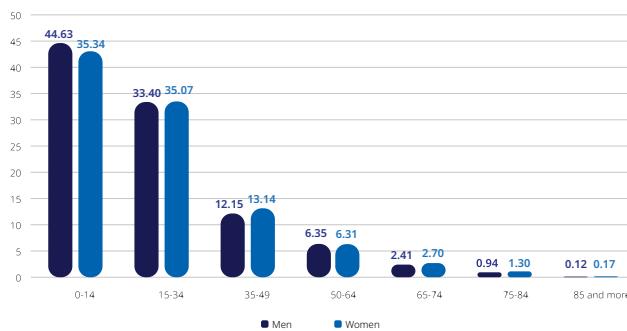


###### Percentage of woman



###### Population distribution statistics by age

###### Age distribution by sex, percentage



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Ages	Women			Men		
	2000	2025	Difference in percentage points	2000	2025	Difference in percentage points
0-14	43.06	30.31	-12.75	44.63	31.75	-12.88
15-34	33.5	37.20	3.7	33.4	38.33	4.93
35-49	13.14	17.63	4.49	12.15	17.37	5.22
50-64	6.31	9.42	3.11	6.35	8.08	1.73
65-74	2.7	3.59	0.89	2.41	3.00	0.59
75-84	1.13	1.55	0.42	0.94	1.27	0.33
85 and more	0.17	0.30	0.13	0.12	0.20	0.08

### Interpretation of demographic data

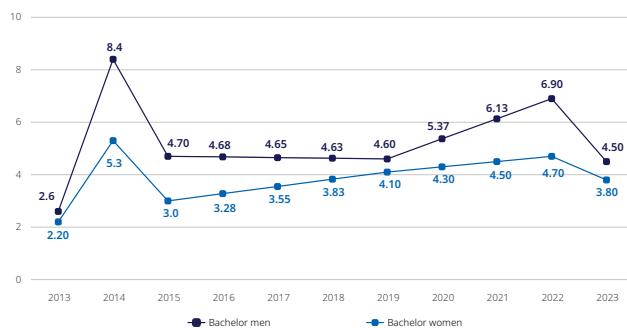
**Distribution of the population by age and gender (2000 vs. 2025):** Guatemala is undergoing a remarkable process of demographic transition. In 2000, 43.1% of women and 44.6% of men were aged 0-14 years. By 2025, these figures will fall to 30.3% and 31.8%, representing a reduction of more than 12 percentage points for both sexes. In contrast, the middle and advanced age groups show significant increases. The group of women aged 35-49 grows from 13.1% to 17.6%, and that of 50-64 from 6.3% to 9.4%. These trends point to a higher future demand for health services, pensions and long-term care.

**Evolution of the percentage of women in the total population (2015-2025):** the proportion of women in the total population remains relatively constant at around 50.36% between 2015 and 2025. However, their predominance in the upper age groups points to the need for differential policies for older age women.

### B. Education level data

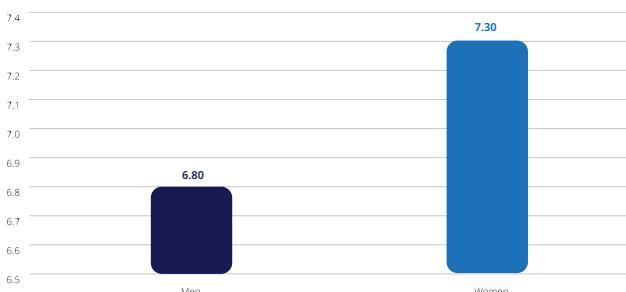
#### Educational attainment statistics

##### Percentage of bachelors, population 25+



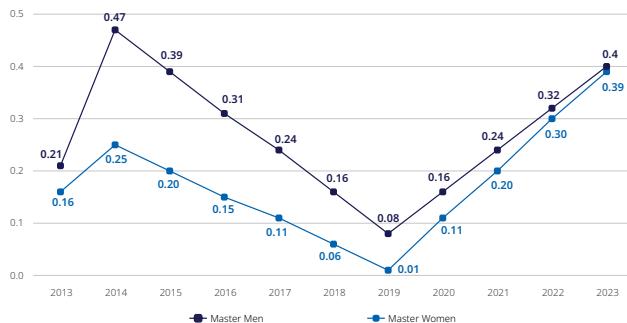
#### Statistics on years of study

##### Years of education



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### Percentage of master, population 25+



### Percentage of PhD, population 25+



### Gross tertiary enrolment rate, percentage



### Interpretation of training data

**Access to tertiary education:** Gross tertiary enrolment rates have improved in the last decade, although still low compared with other countries. Women have slightly outperformed men, reaching a rate of 24.2% in 2020 compared to 19.7% for men.

**Level of education attained (bachelor's, master's, doctorate):** The percentage of women with a degree has historically been lower than that of men, although the gap has narrowed. In 2023, women reached 4.7% compared to 6.9% of men. In masters, the differences are smaller, while in doctorates men still have a slight advantage.

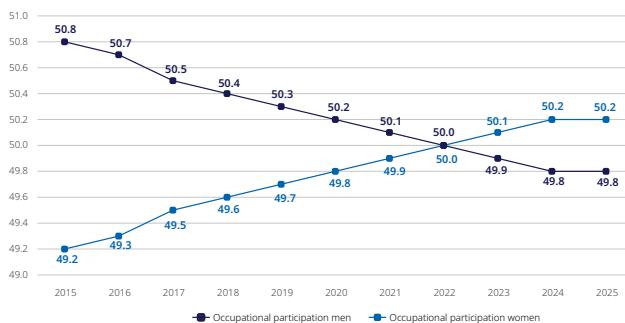
**Average years of formal education:** in 2023, women reached an average of 6.8 years of schooling compared to 6.1 years for men, reflecting a positive reversal of the gender gap in education.

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### C. Employment data

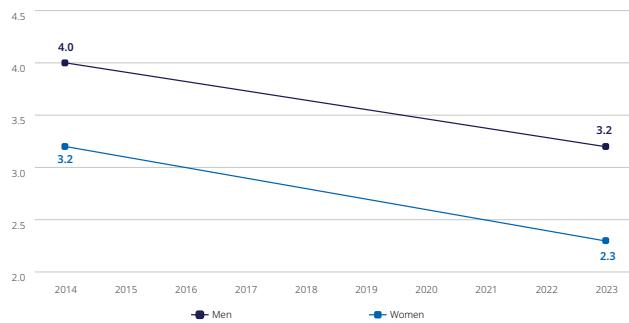
#### Employment statistics

##### Economic participation rate, percentage

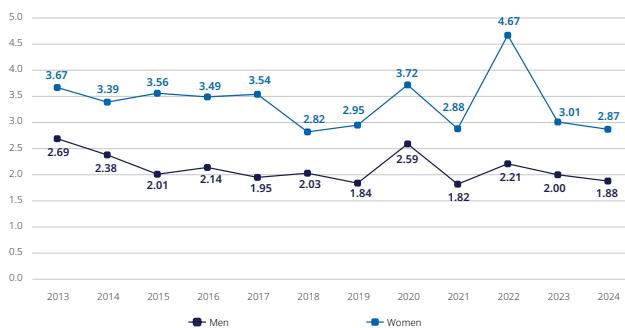


#### Income Statistics

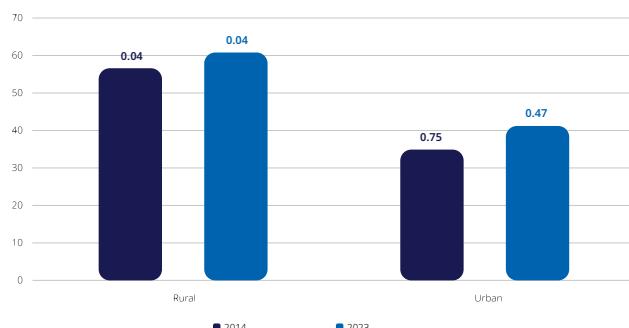
##### Average income, in multiples of the poverty line



##### Unemployment rate, percentage



##### Percentage of adult women dedicated exclusively to unpaid work



#### Interpretation of employment data

**Economic participation rate:** in 2025, it is projected that the female economic participation rate will be 50.2%, compared to 50.8% of men, which represents a minimal gap in aggregate terms, although differences persist by geographical area and age.

**Unpaid work:** in 2023, 56.6 per cent of rural women and 41.2 per cent of urban women reported full-time unpaid work, significantly higher than any level observed among men.

**Unemployment rate:** women face higher rates of unemployment than men. In 2023, the female rate was 4.7%, compared to 3.0% for men.

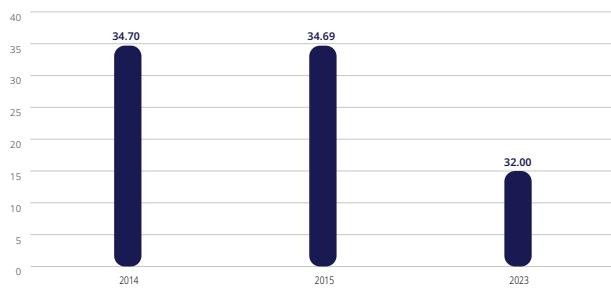
**Income:** in 2023, the average income of women was estimated at 2.9 times the poverty line, while that of men reached 3.7 multiples. This gap of almost one point reflects persistent structural inequalities.

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### E. STEM education and employment data in the energy and transportation sectors

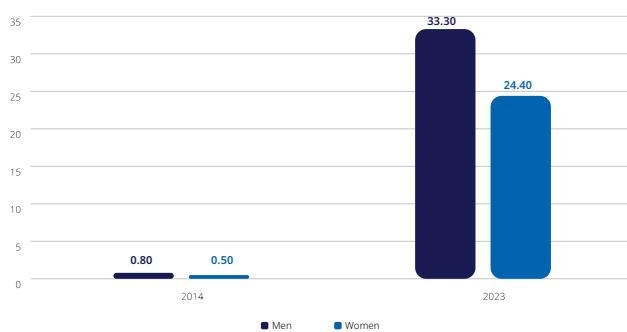
#### Graduate Statistics

##### Percentage of STEM graduates



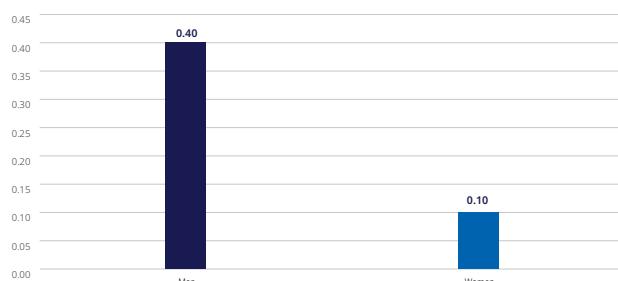
##### Transportation employment statistics

##### Population employed in transport, percentage



##### Energy employment statistics

##### Population employed in energy, gas and water, percentage



#### Interpretation of training and employment data in STEM and strategic sectors

**Female participation in STEM careers:** In 2023, women accounted for 32% of the total number of graduates in STEM areas, a figure similar to that recorded in 2014 and 2015, indicating a stagnant female intake in these strategic fields.

**STEM graduates:** The proportion of women among STEM graduates has remained around 32-35% over the last decade, with no significant progress towards parity.

**Employment in strategic sectors (energy and transport):** in 2023, women accounted for only 0.1% of employment in the energy sector and 0.5% in transport. These figures show the deep exclusion of women in sectors of high economic and technological value.

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### General conclusions

**Persistent educational inequality:** although women have improved their levels of schooling, there are still significant gaps in university and post-graduate degrees.

**Precarious work and low productivity:** women are overrepresented in low-quality jobs and low incomes, which restricts their economic development.

**Excessive burden of unpaid care:** full-time domestic work remains very high among women, especially in rural areas.

**Under-representation in strategic sectors:** women's participation in STEM, energy and transport is minimal, limiting their opportunities in innovation and development sectors.