



KNOWLEDGE COMPENDIUM: REFLECTIONS ON GENDER AND DISABILITY INCLUSION IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BEIJING PLATFORM FOR ACTION



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The UN Interagency Working Group on Gender and Disability Inclusion (UNWGGDI) collected case studies for the Beijing+30 review process, looking at lessons learned, good practices on gender, disability inclusion and intersectionality.

On behalf of the UNWGGDI, UN Women received a total of 32 case studies from 6 UN entities (UN Women, UNEP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNOPS) and 2 UNCTs represented by the UN Resident Coordinator's Offices (India & Honduras). In reflection of the 12 critical areas of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, violence against women and Women in power and decision-making were equally the most addressed critical areas in the case studies while the critical areas around women and the environment as well as the girl child were equally the least addressed.

The views expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the views of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), the United Nations or any of its affiliated organizations.

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UN WOMEN

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INTRODUCTION

In September 2025, the global community will mark the thirtieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and the adoption of the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA). This milestone presents an opportunity to assess progress made in advancing gender equality while identifying remaining gaps, particularly for the inclusion of marginalized groups such as women and girls with disabilities. The sixty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in March 2025 will conduct a comprehensive review and appraisal of the BPfA's implementation, alongside the outcomes of the 23rd special session of the General Assembly. These assessments will provide a basis for strengthening policy interventions and fostering collaborative efforts to ensure that gender equality and disability inclusion remain central to the global development agenda.

The BPfA identifies 12 “critical areas of concern” where urgent action is needed to ensure greater equality and opportunities for women and girls. These areas include: women and poverty; education and training of women; women and health; violence against

women; women and armed conflict; women and the economy; women in power and decision-making; institutional mechanisms; human rights of women; women and the media; women and the environment; and the girl child. Despite the strides made in addressing these critical areas, the intersectionality of gender and disability remains underrepresented in policy frameworks, programmes and research. This compendium aims to bridge that gap by providing an in-depth analysis of gender and disability inclusion across these 12 areas, while also sharing milestones or good practices where disability-inclusive approaches have been mainstreamed.

This document aims to share reflections for United Nations (UN) entities, Member States, policymakers and civil society organizations. It synthesizes best practices, innovative approaches and collaborative efforts to enhance sustainable development and human rights for all. By ensuring that the rights and needs of women and girls with disabilities are adequately addressed, this report reinforces the commitment of the UN system and its stakeholders to a more equitable and inclusive future.

METHODOLOGY AND DATA SOURCES

The initiatives referenced in this report were collated through an open call for submissions to UN Women's Global Community of Practice on Disability Inclusion and Intersectionality and UN Working Group on Gender and Disability Inclusion #UNWGGD, reflecting on a combination of programmatic analysis, project-tracking and self-reported data from UN entities, government agencies and international organizations. These initiatives were categorized as either stand-alone projects or integrated programmes based on their scope, duration and alignment with the Beijing Platform for Action's critical areas of concern. The data were compiled from sources including UN Women programmatic activities and reports, and the BPfA UN report.

UN Women and United Nations agencies included and referenced in this document submitted case studies on a voluntary basis and the information/analysis provided is on the basis of that information, as well as supported by other resources.

OVERVIEW OF THE 12 CRITICAL AREAS OF CONCERN AND DISABILITY INCLUSION

Women and poverty remains a pressing challenge, with women with disabilities facing disproportionately high rates of economic exclusion and unemployment. Systemic barriers prevent them from accessing formal employment opportunities and social protection schemes often fail to address their specific needs. Inclusive microfinance initiatives and vocational training programmes have proven effective in fostering financial independence, and governments must ensure that financial services and employment policies are tailored to support women with disabilities.

Education and training of women is a fundamental area for economic and social empowerment, yet girls with disabilities are among the most marginalized in the education sector. They are less likely to enrol, stay in school or complete their education due to inaccessible school environments, inadequate teacher training and the lack of assistive technologies. UNESCO's inclusive education frameworks highlight the need for barrier-free learning spaces and specialized teacher training programmes to bridge these gaps.

Women and health encompasses significant challenges for women with disabilities, particularly regarding access to reproductive health services, disability-friendly medical facilities and trained health-care personnel. The World Health Organization (WHO) advocates for disability-inclusive health programmes that ensure universal health coverage integrates services for women with disabilities, thereby improving their overall well-being.

Violence against women with disabilities happens at higher rates and these women often face significant barriers when seeking justice as victims of crimes of violence. Many legal and support systems are inaccessible, leaving survivors without adequate protection. Establishing accessible shelters, strengthening reporting mechanisms, and ensuring that legal aid services cater to the needs of women with disabilities are essential steps in addressing this issue.

Women in armed conflict face heightened vulnerabilities, as armed conflict exacerbates existing inequalities, leading to increased risks of violence, displacement and exclusion from humanitarian aid. UN Security Council resolution 1325 calls for the inclusion of women in peacebuilding, but disability considerations remain largely absent in policy frameworks. Integrating disability rights into humanitarian response plans and ensuring the inclusion of women with disabilities in post-conflict reconstruction efforts are crucial.

Women's participation in the economy continues to be embedded in multiple barriers, from securing employment to accessing entrepreneurial opportunities. Workplace discrimination, lack of reasonable accommodations and inaccessible business-support systems limit their economic participation. The International Labour Organization (ILO) promotes disability-inclusive employment policies, and affirmative action strategies are frequently recommended to ensure equal economic opportunities for women with disabilities.

Women in power and decision-making and remain underrepresented in political and leadership roles due to systemic discrimination and accessibility barriers. Electoral processes often exclude women with disabilities, preventing them from fully participating in governance. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has developed initiatives to promote political empowerment, and implementing disability quotas in political representation is recommended to help create a more inclusive leadership landscape.

Institutional mechanisms should incorporate disability perspectives to ensure truly inclusive gender policies. Many national policies still fall short in addressing the intersection of gender and disability, resulting in the exclusion of women with disabilities from legal protections and development programmes. Strengthening inter-agency collaboration and integrating disability rights into national action plans will lead to more equitable policy environments.

The human rights of women must be reinforced to ensure the legal and social protection of women with disabilities. Although the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) includes provisions on disability rights, implementation remains inconsistent. Strengthening monitoring mechanisms, ensuring accountability and advocating for stronger legal protections presents a sustainable approach to help bridge the gap between policy and practice.

Women and the media are often underrepresented or misrepresented, with portrayals that reinforce stereotypes or exclude women with disabilities altogether. Promoting media inclusivity through

training programmes and establishing guidelines for accurate and diverse representation can better enhance visibility and foster more positive societal perceptions.

The women and the environment nexus shows that women with disabilities are disproportionately impacted by climate change and disaster responses, as evacuation and disaster relief efforts often neglect accessibility requirements. Developing disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction frameworks and ensuring that climate policies account for the needs of women with disabilities will help build resilience and safeguard their well-being.

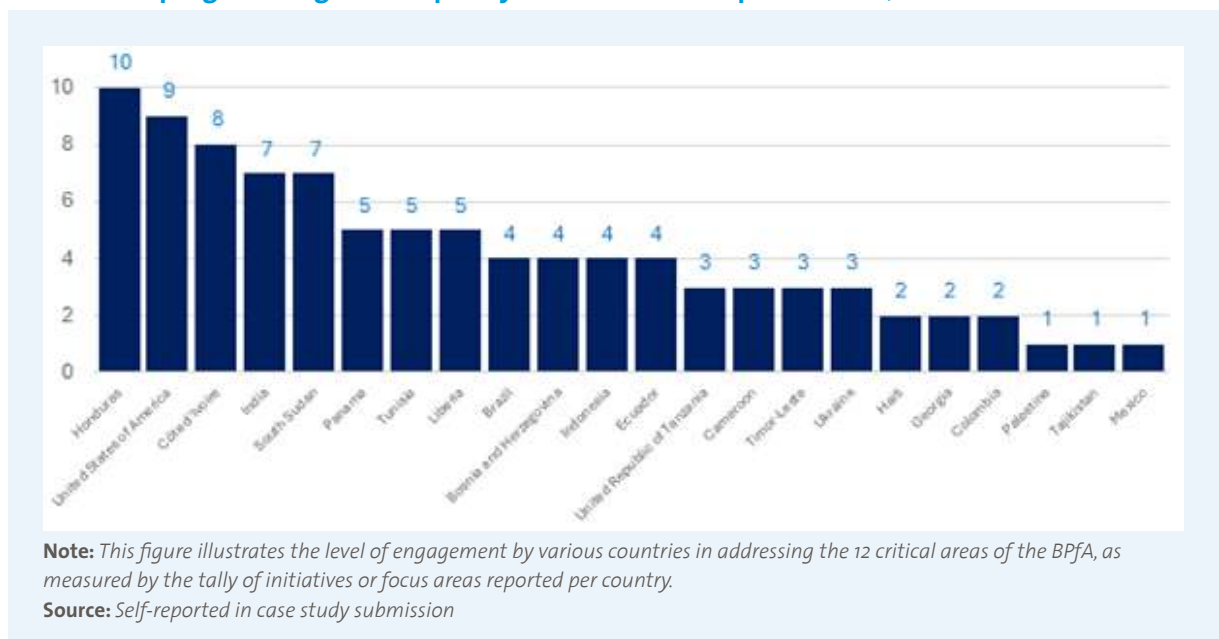
The girl child with disabilities is particularly vulnerable to neglect, abuse and exclusion. Many child protection services fail to integrate disability considerations, leaving young girls without adequate support. UNICEF's child protection programmes highlight best practices in this area, and governments must prioritize strengthening legal safeguards and inclusive child welfare policies to ensure that all girls, regardless of ability, have access to education, health care and protection from harm.



Photo: UN Women/Pathumporn Thongking

LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT WITH THE 12 CRITICAL AREAS OF THE BPFA, BY COUNTRY

FIGURE 1
Status of progress on gender equality and women’s empowerment, across selected countries



[Analysis of the level of engagement for selected countries reveals the following insights:](#)

I. Leadership in addressing critical areas

An analysis of the level of engagement reported in the case study reflected above reveals that Honduras leads with the highest count of initiatives, implementing 10 of the critical areas of concern. The United States of America follows closely with nine initiatives, while Côte d'Ivoire has engaged in eight of the critical areas. South Sudan and India each have addressed seven critical areas. This suggests that these countries

are making significant strides in implementing and addressing multiple critical areas of the BPfA. Their broad engagement reflects established frameworks, strong resource allocation, and prioritization of gender equality and women’s empowerment in their gender machinery. A comprehensive approach must ensure that disability inclusion is embedded across all critical areas.

II. Strengthening support for underrepresented countries

Countries with lower engagement with the critical areas, such as Tajikistan, Palestine and Mexico, underscore the importance of targeted support to enhance their engagement with the BPfA’s 12 critical areas of concern. These case studies demonstrate the significant role of providing technical assistance, funding and policy guidance to increase capacity

for more comprehensive engagement, especially for marginalized groups, including women with disabilities. This will help ensure that all countries can contribute to advancing the Platform’s goals in a truly inclusive manner, creating a more equitable global effort towards gender equality and disability inclusion.

III. Regional representation and disparities

Countries from Latin America, Africa and Asia feature prominently in the analysis, demonstrating strong regional commitment to the BPfA. However, disparities between regions are also evident, pointing to potential challenges, such as political instability, resource constraints and limited institutional capacity in some areas. These challenges can hinder the ability of certain countries to fully engage with the 12 critical

areas of the BPfA, despite clear regional commitment. Furthermore, this may also be a reflection of the compounded barriers experienced by women with disabilities, including social stigma, lack of accessibility and inadequate legal frameworks to ensure their full participation in gender equality efforts.

IV. Leveraging best practices

To overcome regional disparities, it is essential to document and disseminate successful strategies from high-performing countries, such as Honduras, the United States of America and Côte d'Ivoire. By sharing these best practices, countries with less engagement can learn from the experiences of others, adapting successful strategies to their own contexts and improving their efforts to address gender and

disability within the critical areas of the BPfA. These strategies should include explicit measures to ensure that women with disabilities are integrated into all aspects of gender equality initiatives, address their specific needs and ensure their participation in decision-making processes.

V. Unequal contributions across countries

The top five countries reporting engagement with the highest number of critical areas—Honduras, the United States of America, Côte d'Ivoire, South Sudan and India – account for nearly 44 per cent of the total critical area engagement. This concentration highlights their outsized role in advancing the Platform's goals. In contrast, countries such as Tajikistan, Palestine and Mexico, which have only reported engagement with one critical area, are significantly underrepresented. This unequal distribution suggests that while some countries are making substantial progress, others

need more support to enhance their engagement and address all 12 critical areas effectively. Furthermore, the disparity in engagement may also reflect the varying levels of attention given to the inclusion of women with disabilities in various programmes and policies initiatives, considering the limited recognition for inclusive policies and programmes that directly address the needs of women with disabilities.

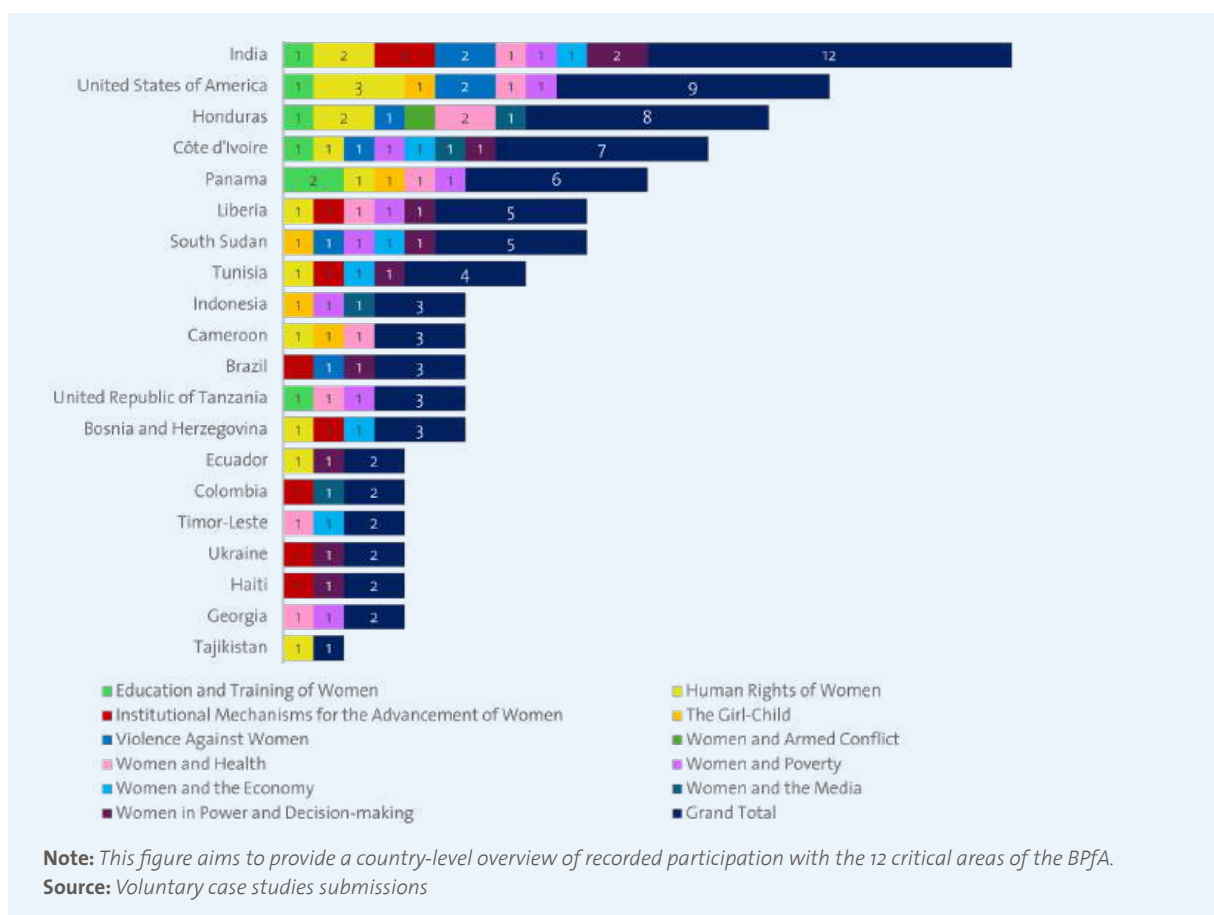
VI. Enhancing regional collaboration

Fostering partnerships and knowledge-sharing both within and across regions is essential to addressing systemic barriers and amplifying collective efforts towards achieving the BPfA's goals. By creating platforms for collaboration, countries with fewer initiatives can tap into regional expertise and resources. This will not only help improve their engagement but also promote a more balanced and

unified approach to achieving gender equality across all regions. Crucially, regional collaborations must prioritize disability inclusion, ensuring that women with disabilities are involved in leadership, planning and programme implementation at every level. This will ensure that no one is left behind in the global pursuit of gender equality and disability rights.

COUNTRY-LEVEL ENGAGEMENT WITH SPECIFIC CRITICAL AREAS OF THE BPfA

FIGURE 2
Participation in initiatives emphasizing focus areas of the BPfA, for selected countries



An analysis of the engagement for selected countries reveals the following insights:

I. Distribution of focus areas

An analysis of countries' engagement across the 12 critical areas of the BPfA reveals that the most commonly addressed critical area is the human rights of women, with 18 taggings, followed by women and the economy (16), the girl-child (13), and violence against women (12). However, areas such as the education and training of women (1), women and health (3), and women and the media

(5) have received less engagement. This distribution shows a clear prioritization of certain critical areas while others remain underaddressed. Notably, these underemphasized areas are a reflection of ongoing and pertinent challenges around access to education and health services for women with disabilities, as well as media representation of women with disabilities.

II. Supporting comprehensive programmes

Countries with limited engagement with the critical areas demonstrate the need for targeted technical and financial support to broaden their focus on critical areas such as the girl-child and women in armed conflict. Additionally, it is essential that these programmes integrate the specific needs of women

with disabilities, ensuring that initiatives do not only address gender equality but also promote disability inclusion. This support should focus on building capacity to create inclusive policies that consider both gender and disability, enabling these countries to better engage with all 12 critical areas.

III. Country-level insights

Countries like India (14 initiatives) and the United States (13 initiatives) demonstrate the broadest focus, addressing multiple areas extensively. Honduras, Côte d'Ivoire and Panama also show significant engagement across many areas, with 10, 8 and 8 initiatives, respectively. Smaller contributors, such as Tajikistan and Mexico, are addressing just one focus area, signalling room for broader engagement.

However, the scope of engagement in these countries often overlooks the intersection of gender and disability. For example, women with disabilities may be excluded from programmes focusing on women's health, the economy or violence prevention due to lack of accessibility or awareness. A holistic approach must be encouraged to ensure that women with disabilities are equally represented and have their specific needs met in all critical areas.

IV. Intersectionality

Many countries addressed overlapping issues. For example, Honduras covered women and health, violence against women, and women and the economy simultaneously, demonstrating an integrated approach. This intersectional approach can be particularly effective in addressing the complex and overlapping challenges faced by women with disabilities. For instance, a woman with a disability might face violence, lack of health care access and economic marginalization all at once. Countries must be encouraged to design integrated programmes that not only address gender equality but also prioritize disability inclusion as part of their broader strategy.

To address the underrepresentation of critical areas such as women in armed conflict, women and the media, and the girl child, targeted global and regional initiatives should be developed. Partnerships, advocacy and capacity-building efforts in these domains should be geared towards raising awareness and providing resources to ensure that these critical areas are addressed in a disability-inclusive manner.

V. Expanding regional collaboration and cross-sectoral approaches

Regional collaborations should be encouraged to bridge gaps across critical areas and regions, ensuring alignment with broader gender equality goals while addressing country-specific needs. These collaborations should explicitly focus on the intersectionality of gender and disability, ensuring that the needs of women with disabilities are included

in regional and cross-sectoral strategies. By aligning efforts, countries can amplify their collective impact and share resources and knowledge that will improve the inclusivity of gender equality initiatives across all sectors.

VI. Partial focus across specific areas

Countries such as Tunisia, Liberia and Brazil demonstrate selective but focused participation, addressing fewer categories but placing a notable emphasis on areas like women in power and decision-making, institutional mechanisms, and women and the economy. Timor-Leste and Georgia also highlight targeted efforts, focusing primarily on institutional mechanisms and education, yet lack broader

engagement across other areas. While these targeted efforts are valuable, it is important to ensure that they do not exclude women with disabilities. The least-addressed areas, such as women in armed conflict, the girl-child, and women and the media, require greater effort and implementation support in policy and programming.

VII. Underrepresented areas and gaps

The girl-child, women and the media, and women in armed conflict are identified as the least-addressed critical areas globally. This suggests potential challenges in mobilizing attention and resources for these areas. Countries such as Mexico, Palestine and Tajikistan show limited focus, addressing only one or two areas, which highlights the need for more equitable engagement across all critical areas.

These gaps in focus present an opportunity for targeted support to encourage more comprehensive participation, especially from countries with single-focus contributions. These gaps should also consider the specific needs of girls with disabilities and women with disabilities in armed conflict or media representation.

VIII. Targeted support

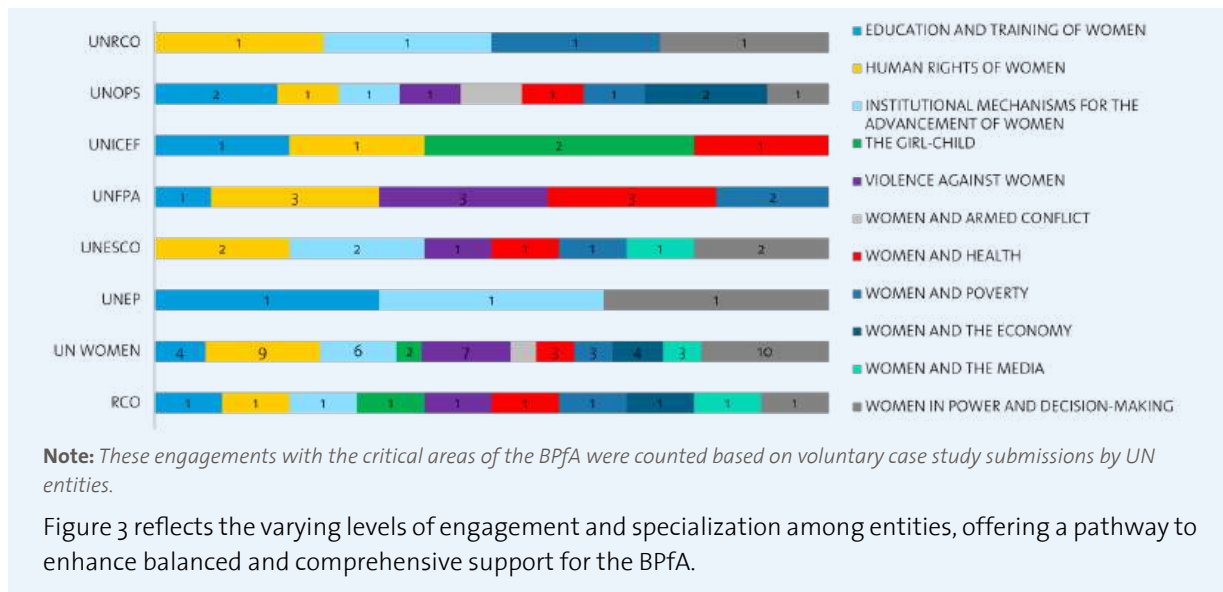
Countries like Tajikistan and Mexico, which have low engagement across critical areas, need targeted support. This support should not only focus on encouraging broader engagement with the BPfA but also ensure that programmes are designed with a disability-inclusive lens. Tailored technical and financial support should focus on promoting the inclusion of women with disabilities in all areas, ensuring that these countries can engage meaningfully with the BPfA.



Photo: UN Women/Praveen Rao Kaliga

ENTITY-LEVEL FOCUS ON CRITICAL AREAS OF THE BEIJING PLATFORM FOR ACTION

FIGURE 3
Levels of engagement and specialization, by BPfA critical area of concern, for selected United Nations entities



Entity-level focus on critical areas of the Beijing Platform for Action

Figure 3 reflects the varying levels of engagement and specialization across United Nations entities, illustrating pathways to enhance balanced and comprehensive support for the BPfA. A critical part of

this analysis involves understanding how entities are integrating disability inclusion into their efforts and identifying any gaps that require further attention.

I. Engagement across entities

UN Women leads the collective effort, addressing 11 of the 12 critical areas, particularly excelling in women in power and decision-making, human rights of women, and violence against women. However, it is important to recognize that the focus on women with disabilities could be further strengthened, especially in areas like human rights and economic empowerment. Women with disabilities often face distinct barriers, such as limited access to justice, discriminatory policies and social stigma, which need to be addressed more explicitly in programmes related to these critical areas. Other entities such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Resident Coordinator’s

Office (UNRCO) also contribute significantly to high engagement, particularly focusing on the human rights of women and institutional mechanisms. While these contributions are notable, there is a need to ensure that women with disabilities are considered in both human rights and institutional mechanisms. It is important to encourage UN entities to ensure that disability inclusion is mainstreamed across all activities. This includes making deliberate efforts to address the unique needs of women with disabilities in policies, programmes and interventions related to human rights, violence and decision-making. Further integration of disability considerations into existing frameworks will promote greater equality across intersecting identities.

II. Underrepresented areas

Notably, critical areas such as women and armed conflict, the girl child, and women and the media, are notably underrepresented across all entities. Women and armed conflict and the girl child are particularly lacking, with only a few instances of engagement. This presents a critical opportunity to expand the focus on the intersectionality of disability in these domains. Women with disabilities in armed conflict settings face heightened risks of exploitation and discrimination, which are not always adequately addressed by current interventions. Similarly, women and the media also received minimal attention, suggesting a need for a stronger focus on how media can empower women with disabilities. The media play an influential role in shaping societal perceptions

and in empowering women with disabilities through increased visibility and representation, which is key to achieving gender equality.

There is a need for increased focus on women in armed conflict and the girl child. This could involve creating new initiatives that address the intersectionality of gender and disability in conflict contexts using media and education. Additionally, partnerships with OPDs and advocacy groups could help bridge the gap and ensure that these underrepresented areas receive adequate attention.

III. Entity-specific contributions

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and UNICEF engage selectively but show targeted interventions in specific areas. UNEP, for instance, focuses on cross-cutting issues such as environmental sustainability and the role of women in addressing environmental challenges. In this regard, environmental policies and sustainability programmes should consider the impact of climate change on women with disabilities, who may experience additional barriers to accessing resources and services. Similarly, UNICEF emphasizes the girl child and education and training of women but does not extend its focus to broader areas. For children with disabilities, UNICEF has an opportunity to enhance its focus on inclusive education, ensuring that all children, regardless of disability, can access

quality education without discrimination. By fostering inclusive education systems, UNICEF can contribute to the broader goal of gender equality in education.

UNEP and UNICEF should expand their focus to more comprehensively address disability inclusion in their respective areas. For UNEP, this could mean paying closer attention to the specific environmental needs of women with disabilities, while UNICEF could work to ensure that girls with disabilities benefit from inclusive and accessible education programmes. Targeted initiatives and collaborations with disability-focused organizations will ensure that women with disabilities are included in all aspects of environmental sustainability and education.

IV. Broad focus vs. specialized focus

While UN Women demonstrates broad engagement across multiple critical areas, other entities like UNESCO and UNFPA tend to specialize in select domains. This division highlights the complementary roles of these entities in advancing the goals of the Beijing Platform for Action. However, it is crucial that these specialized entities also ensure that disability inclusion is a key component of their work. UNESCO, with its expertise in education, can ensure that its

programmes focus on inclusive education for children with disabilities. This includes making sure that schools and curricula are accessible and welcoming to all students, regardless of disability. Similarly, UNFPA, which addresses reproductive health and rights, should work to ensure that women with disabilities have access to sexual and reproductive health services that are inclusive and sensitive to their specific needs.

This highlights the significance of fostering collaborative approaches among UN entities to share best practices for integrating disability inclusion across both broad and specialized focus areas. Encouraging specialized entities like UNESCO and UNFPA to work with disability-focused organizations will help ensure

that women with disabilities are represented and supported in all relevant interventions. Additionally, it would be beneficial to integrate disability inclusion into the core mandates of all entities, particularly those focused on education and health.

V. Key takeaways

The broad engagement in multiple critical areas can serve as a model for other entities, but there is still room for enhancing the integration of women with disabilities, particularly in areas such as human rights, violence and decision-making. Areas such as women in armed conflict, the girl child, and women and the media remain underrepresented and require increased focus on the intersectionality of gender and disability. Entities like UNEP and UNICEF

are addressing important areas but could further enhance their work by considering the specific needs of women with disabilities, particularly in environmental sustainability and education. Finally, cross-entity collaboration is essential to ensure that disability inclusion is embedded across all critical areas, ensuring that all women benefit from the UN's efforts to promote gender equality.



Photo: UN Women Europe and Central Asia/Rena Effendi

OVERVIEW OF THE 12 CRITICAL AREAS ADDRESSED BY CASE STUDIES

Human rights of women (16.7%)

The focus on the human rights of women represents emphasis placed on protecting and promoting women's rights across United Nations entities. In alignment with UN Women's core mandate, protecting women's rights is foundational, as it ensures that women, regardless of their background or identity, can live free from discrimination, violence and other forms of injustice. As this is the most represented area, there is considerable action to strengthen legal frameworks, provide access to justice and promote

gender equality in line with international human rights standards.

However, while there is substantial attention to women's rights, the intersectionality of gender and disability needs further focus. Women with disabilities often face compounded human rights violations, including discrimination, limited access to legal support, and barriers in accessing health and social services.

Women in power and decision-making (14.8%)

The next-most prominent area is women in power and decision-making, where a significant effort is focused on increasing women's participation in leadership roles and decision-making processes. This area is critical in advancing gender equality, as decision-making positions control the resources, policies and programmes that shape society. UN Women, RCO and the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) show strong commitments to ensuring that women have equal representation in leadership at all levels, from local governance to international policymaking.

While women's participation in decision-making is progressing, there remains a gap in the representation of women with disabilities in leadership roles. This group often faces additional barriers, such as physical access buildings, and an overall lack of

accommodations or accessible spaces. Addressing these barriers will be essential for ensuring that women with disabilities are equally represented and can contribute meaningfully to leadership and decision-making.

A more intentional focus on the inclusion of women with disabilities in academic and professional leadership programmes is necessary. This could include developing leadership pathways that accommodate the specific needs of women with disabilities and ensuring that all leadership training and decision-making platforms are fully accessible. Collaborating with organizations that focus on disability rights will also help integrate the voices and experiences of women with disabilities into decision-making spaces.

Violence against women (12.0%)

Violence against women is another key area reporting high levels of targeted efforts, reflecting a strong commitment to addressing gender-based violence (GBV) and creating safer environments for women. UN Women and UNFPA, among others, have made substantial contributions to raising awareness, implementing protective policies and providing services for survivors of violence. However,

women with disabilities experience violence at a disproportionately higher rate, often with less access to support services or avenues for seeking justice. This intersection of gender and disability requires more focused efforts to ensure that women with disabilities are not only protected but also supported in accessing justice and services in violence prevention and recovery initiatives.

UN Women and key strategic partners need to strengthen further develop targeted initiatives to combat violence against women with disabilities. This should include ensuring accessibility to shelters, legal aid and counselling services. Collaborating with organizations that specialize in disability rights

can help tailor interventions to address the specific risks and barriers faced by women with disabilities, ensuring their full protection and recovery from violence.

Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women (11.1%)

Strengthening institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women is a critical area, as it establishes the foundational support for gender equality at national, regional and international levels. This involves creating and reinforcing institutional frameworks that support women's empowerment, such as gender-responsive policies and gender equality frameworks within institutions. UN Women, UNESCO and UNFPA are heavily involved in this area, working to ensure that institutions support women's advancement through gender-sensitive policies and practices.

However, the needs of women with disabilities are often overlooked in these institutional frameworks. It is vital that institutional mechanisms specifically address the barriers faced by women with disabilities,

such as discrimination in the workplace, lack of accommodations and insufficient access to resources and support. Incorporating disability considerations into gender equality policies will ensure that institutional mechanisms promote the advancement of all women, including those with disabilities.

It is crucial that institutional mechanisms incorporate disability inclusion into their core frameworks. This can be achieved by developing guidelines and policies that explicitly address the unique barriers faced by women with disabilities and ensure their full participation in institutional decision-making processes. Training institutional leaders on the intersectionality of gender and disability will also help ensure that policies are inclusive and equitable.

Education and training of women (9.3%)

Education and training of women is a vital area for achieving gender equality and economic empowerment. It is well-represented, with a focus on ensuring that women have access to education, training and skills development. This supports their economic independence and enhances their opportunities for leadership roles. UN Women and the RCO have been pivotal in advancing women's access to education, particularly in marginalized communities.

However, there remains a significant gap in addressing the educational needs of women with disabilities. Barriers to accessible education, such as physical inaccessibility, lack of specialized educational materials and attitudinal discrimination, persist. Ensuring that educational institutions are accessible and inclusive for women with disabilities is a crucial step towards achieving universal education and promoting gender equality.

Education programmes must be designed to accommodate the needs of women with disabilities, including accessible learning environments, specialized resources and support services. The UN and partner development organizations should prioritize inclusive education initiatives that focus on breaking down the barriers preventing women with disabilities from accessing quality education and skills development.

Women and health (9.3%)

The focus on women and health is essential for ensuring that women's health needs are met, with an emphasis on reproductive health. UNFPA and other agencies such as UNESCO have made contributions to improving women's health services and outcomes. However, women with disabilities often face unique health challenges that are not adequately addressed in mainstream health programmes. For example, women with disabilities may have limited access to reproductive health services due to physical, communication, or attitudinal barriers, which further exacerbates their vulnerability.

Health programmes should be made more inclusive by integrating the specific health needs of women with disabilities, including accessible health care facilities, trained health care providers and comprehensive reproductive health services. Collaboration with disability-focused health organizations is key to ensuring that all women can benefit from gender-sensitive health care services.

Women and poverty (8.3%)

Addressing women and poverty remains a critical focus, with a significant share of initiatives aimed at economically empowering women and reducing poverty. Poverty alleviation programmes are essential to achieving gender equality and are strongly represented by UN Women and UNOPS. However, women with disabilities face disproportionate poverty due to limited access to education, employment and social services. They often face additional challenges, such as inaccessible work environments and discrimination in employment, which exacerbate their economic vulnerability.

It is crucial to ensure that poverty alleviation programmes specifically address the needs of women with disabilities. This includes creating inclusive job opportunities, providing accessible vocational training, and ensuring that women with disabilities have equal access to financial services and social safety nets.

Women and the economy (6.5%)

Women and the economy is a crucial area in the context of improved livelihoods, although it represents a smaller share of concerted efforts. Economic empowerment programmes supported by UN Women aim to reduce barriers to women's employment and promote entrepreneurship opportunities. While these initiatives are beneficial, women with disabilities often face additional economic barriers, such as limited access to credit, inaccessible workplaces and discrimination in the labour market.

Women's economic empowerment programmes must also focus on creating accessible work environments and promoting entrepreneurship opportunities for women with disabilities. This could include offering financial support and business training specifically targeted at women with disabilities, as well as advocating for policies that promote equal employment opportunities.

The girl child (4.6%)

Although the girl child represents a smaller focus area, it remains a priority area for organizations with aligned core mandates like UNICEF and UN Women. This includes ensuring access to education, freedom from violence and opportunities for healthy development. However, girls with disabilities are often excluded from these programmes due to accessibility barriers in schools and lack of awareness of their specific needs.

It is essential to ensure that programmes focusing on empowering the girl child are inclusive of girls with disabilities, by ensuring that schools are accessible, and that they have equal access to resources, education and protection from violence.

Women and the media (4.6%)

Women and the media is a key critical area of concern as the media play a crucial role in challenging societal norms and promoting gender equality. This area, though smaller in focus, is essential for creating

positive portrayals of women. However, the media often neglect the representation of women with disabilities, perpetuating stereotypes and further marginalizing them.

Women and armed conflict (2.8%)

Finally, women with disabilities living in situations in armed conflict often represent the least effort and/or focus, and the inclusion of women with disabilities in peace and security processes often remains a neglected area for gender equality. Women with disabilities face additional challenges in conflict settings, such as limited access to humanitarian aid, violence and exploitation.

Peacebuilding and conflict-resolution programmes should be designed with the needs of women with disabilities in mind. Ensuring that they have access to protection, rehabilitation and inclusion in decision-making processes during and after conflicts is essential for achieving long-term gender equality in post-conflict settings.



Photo: UN Women/Pathumporn Thongking

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

Strengthening collaborative mechanisms and leveraging UN Women's expertise

Inter-agency collaboration remains a key strategy in addressing gender gaps and ensuring that all critical areas of the Beijing Platform for Action receive adequate attention. Establishing joint programmes focused on underrepresented areas, particularly women and armed conflict, will encourage cross-sectoral engagement and pooled resources. Reinforcing institutional frameworks that prioritize gender and disability inclusion will also help to ensure that marginalized groups receive the necessary support and representation. As the leading agency in gender equality and women's empowerment,

UN Women's knowledge and experience should be harnessed to strengthen gender-related efforts across all UN entities. Facilitating knowledge-sharing initiatives, technical assistance programmes and partnerships between UN Women and other entities will contribute to ensuring that gender mainstreaming is effectively implemented across sectors. These efforts should also integrate disability-inclusive approaches to enhance accessibility and participation for women and girls with disabilities in economic, social and political spheres.

Developing cross-sectoral approaches

Gender equality should be integrated into broader global priorities, including climate resilience, digital transformation and sustainable development. Designing interventions that link critical areas to these emerging fields will create more sustainable and impactful solutions. In particular, ensuring that

women, particularly those with disabilities, have access to digital literacy programmes can improve economic inclusion and leadership representation. Likewise, gender-responsive climate policies should consider the vulnerabilities of marginalized groups and enhance their adaptive capacities.

Strengthening capacity-building initiatives

There is a need for a more systemic approach to strengthen women-led OPDs. This involves investing in long-term capacity-building initiatives that will enable these organizations to advocate for disability rights independently. As education and training is, in

itself, also a critical area of concern, it is also equally important to ensure that gender and disability inclusion is considered – both as a topic in itself, as well as in the design of capacity-building programmes – both by and for UN entities.

Leveraging inclusive media

To increase awareness of the need for gender and disability inclusion, and to ensure that key relevant content is truly accessible to those who need it, media professionals and accessible media products are essential. More inclusive media practices can tap into a broader audience, including women and persons

with disabilities who make up a significant portion of the population. There is also intrinsic economic and societal value in inclusive media. Promoting this is important, both from a human rights perspective and for truly harnessing the power of women in media as a critical area of concern.

The United Nations Interagency Working Group on Gender and Disability Inclusion (UNWGGDI) collected case studies for the Beijing+30 review process, looking at lessons learned, good practices on gender, disability inclusion and intersectionality.

This knowledge compendium aims to share reflections for United Nations (UN) entities, Member States, policymakers and civil society organizations. It synthesizes best practices, innovative approaches and collaborative efforts to enhance sustainable development and human rights for all. By ensuring that the rights and needs of women and girls with disabilities are adequately addressed, this document reinforces the commitment of the UN system and its stakeholders to a more equitable and inclusive future

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