



Beijing+30: From Words to Action

NATIONAL ACTION PLANS TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

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ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

UN Women

New York, July 2025

INTRODUCTION

In 1995, 189 governments unanimously adopted the **Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action** (BPfA) as a groundbreaking and far-reaching framework for the achievement of gender equality and the realization of the human rights of women and girls. The commitments made in the Platform for Action were forward thinking for its time, and many of the critical areas of concern identified in the Platform for Action remain pertinent for responding to the complex challenges of today, particularly the commitment to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls.

At the 69th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW69), Member States reaffirmed their commitment to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action through the adoption by consensus of a powerful **Political Declaration**. This Beijing+30 series highlights key normative developments, best practice approaches and case studies of promising initiatives alongside key tools and resources to support implementation. It also highlights critical gaps, challenges and priority actions needed to accelerate efforts to eliminate VAWG.

It also complements and builds on the "**Beijing+30 Action Agenda**, particularly Action 3, For All Women and Girls: Zero Violence and offers evidence-based policy and programmatic solutions for member states who are invited to make concrete and transformative commitments to advance gender equality at the United Nations General Assembly High-Level Meeting on Beijing+30 in September 2025.

ACT to End Violence Against Women Programme

This paper was developed under the ACT to End Violence against Women and Girls programme funded by the EU. ACT is a new game-changing commitment between the European Commission and UN Women as co-leaders of the Action Coalition on Gender Based Violence (GBV), in collaboration with the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women. The **ACT shared advocacy agenda** is elevating the priorities and amplifying the voices of feminist women's rights movements and provides a collaborative framework focused on common priorities, strategies and actions.

To accelerate efforts in eliminating VAWG, ACT is calling for:

1. **Bold investments in prevention and responses to end violence against women and girls (VAWG);**
2. **Strengthened financing, protection and support to women's rights organizations;**
3. **Enhanced accountability, access to justice and the full and effective implementation of laws to prevent and respond to VAWG.**

These advocacy priorities reflect the core demands of the **Beijing+30 Action Agenda** and contribute to collective efforts toward the **High-level Meeting of the General Assembly in September 2025**, where Member States are called upon to make concrete and transformative commitments to advance gender equality.

INTERNATIONAL NORMS AND STANDARDS

International norms and standards call for the adoption of comprehensive national action plans to combat violence against women.

In 1995, the **Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action** (Platform for Action) recognized violence against women and girls (VAWG) as a violation of human rights and as an obstacle to the achievement of the objectives of equality, development and peace. The Platform for Action further recognized VAWG as a manifestation of the historically unequal power relations between men and women requiring holistic and multidisciplinary approaches. The Platform for Action urges States to formulate and implement, at all appropriate levels, plans of action to eliminate violence against women, and to allocate adequate resources for the implementation of plans of action at all appropriate levels.

CSW57

Subsequently in 2013, the **Agreed Conclusions of the 57th Commission on the Status of Women** called on States to develop and implement effective multisectoral national policies, strategies and programmes, with the full and effective participation of women and girls, which include measures for prevention, protection and support services and responses; data collection, research, monitoring and evaluation; the establishment of coordination mechanisms; allocation of adequate financial and human resources; independent national monitoring and accountability mechanisms; and clear timelines and national benchmarks for results to be achieved.

CEDAW General Recommendation No. 35

CEDAW General Recommendation No. 35 on gender-based violence against women, updating general recommendation No. 19, further called on States to develop and evaluate all legislation, policies and programmes in consultation with civil society organizations, in particular women's organizations, including those that represent women affected by intersecting forms of discrimination.



BEST PRACTICE APPROACHES

In addition to normative commitments, there is growing consensus that national coordinated approaches for eliminating violence against women and girls are key for real, widespread, and sustained impact. National Action Plans enable all sectors concerned to better coordinate and to work towards the same results, to ensure that work is joined up, that synergies are identified and optimized and to reduce duplication of efforts. Comprehensive approaches to policies and laws are urgently needed as they make a significant difference - the average prevalence rate of intimate partner violence (IPV) (over the last 12 months) is nearly 2.5 times higher in States with low levels of comprehensive VAW measures, as compared to States with a high level of comprehensiveness in adopting a broad range of types of VAW measures.¹

Since the Platform for Action was adopted in 1995, countries have increasingly adopted National Action Plans.

The **30-year review of the Platform for Action**, found that

in 2024

79% of States



had introduced, updated or expanded national action plans, up from 68 per cent in 2019.



The development, implementation and review of National Action Plans across different regions point to key components to ensure

effectiveness **as outlined in UN Women's Handbook for National Action Plans on violence against women.**

National Action Plans should:

be grounded in

» HUMAN RIGHTS

and recognize violence against women as a form of discrimination



address

» ALL FORMS OF VAWG

comprehensively, embed an intersectional approach and be driven by a collective vision of change



ensure the

» MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION OF CIVIL SOCIETY

and experts in development, implementation and monitoring



ensure a

» COORDINATED, WHOLE-OF-GOVERNMENT AND MULTISECTORAL APPROACH

where various government entities, civil society and experts work together, and activities are jointly performed by diverse ministries, public administrations, public agencies



be

» HOLISTIC AND COMPREHENSIVE

specifically articulating short-term, medium-term and long-term goals and actions on prevention, response and recovery driving change at the societal, community, interpersonal, and individual levels through whole-of-population approaches



address the root causes of violence against women and girls and include

» PRIMARY PREVENTION

strategies



provide for

» EFFECTIVE RESPONSES

through coordinated multisectoral essential services including short-term crisis interventions and longer-term service provision focused on recovery and empowerment of victims-survivors accompanied by concrete, action-oriented implementation plans with adequate gender responsive budgets for cross-cutting actions across the whole of government in addition to programme funding



support

» REGULAR DATA COLLECTION

on the nature, prevalence and impact of all forms of violence against women including on emerging issues and novel forms of violence such as online or technology facilitated gender-based violence



have

» ROBUST GOVERNANCE

structures to ensure high-level political oversight, clear designation of implementation roles and responsibilities, and clear monitoring and accountability mechanisms



include

» MONITORING AND EVALUATION

frameworks to track long-term progress and to adapt and adjust strategies and processes.



PROMISING PRACTICES

Cambodia's third iteration, the National Action Plan to Prevent VAW, 2019–2023 builds on two previous NAPs and aims to reduce violence against women and girls, with a focus on prevention, legal protections and multi-sectoral services, formulation and implementation of laws and policies and review, monitoring, and evaluation. It includes a comprehensive and long-term approach to prevention across multiple settings and focuses on multisectoral coordination and collaboration. To track progress and ensure accountability, the NAP provides for an annual activity report, mid-term review and final evaluation.

In 2020, **Fiji** began the development of a *National Action Plan to Prevent Violence Against All Women and Girls 2023-2028*, making it the first Pacific Island country to have a plan that prioritises prevention. There was strong engagement with civil society and experts at every stage of the process, including in defining decision-making and accountability structures, definitions of VAWG and defining the areas of consultation. The gender equality machinery worked closely with civil society organisations and development partners to ensure there was buy in and support for the NAP across government departments.

In 2020, **Finland's** Ministry of Justice established an intersectoral working group to create a National Action Plan for Combating Violence against Women (2020–2023). A key focus of the Plan is the prevention of all forms of violence, particularly digital violence. Civil society, including women's organizations, actively contributed to the development of the Plan through workshops, and in the implementation processes.

KEY RESOURCE

The [2012 UN Women National Action Plans Handbook](#) sets out the key elements a NAP should have to build and/or strengthen an effective, integrated response system

The [2023 UN Women 'Together for prevention: Handbook on multisectoral national action plans to prevent violence against women and girls'](#) focuses on how to design NAPs with a specific focus on prevention

The [UN Women Global Database on VAW](#) allows easy access to information on measures undertaken by UN Member States to address all forms of VAWG, including NAPs



COMMON GAPS AND CHALLENGES FOR NATIONAL ACTION PLANS

A 2025 comprehensive analysis of UN Women's Global Database on Violence against Women found that of 193 countries, 34% have not adopted a specific VAW national action plan or strategy.² A challenge that has emerged in implementing national action plans is weak governance arrangements including the failure to designate roles and responsibilities and poor coordination between entities, and an absence of monitoring and accountability mechanisms. The absence of meaningful avenues for civil society organizations to participate in the process and share their expertise can mean that in some cases National Action Plans are disconnected from services and organizations that have specialist knowledge of key issues.

National Action Plans are most often focused on responding to violence after it has occurred, with less attention placed on prevention (see From Words to Action on Prevention). Further, the uneven or inadequate attention to all forms of VAWG can also be a challenge, for example many National Action Plans do not address trafficking as a form of VAWG. Narrowly focused NAPs are particularly concerning in the context of new and emerging forms of violence such as violence that occurs through or is amplified by the use of technology. Finally, the lack of designated and sustained funding to match the scale of the problem also impedes implementation.



ACTION PRIORITIES TO ENSURE EFFECTIVE NATIONAL ACTIONS PLANS

1

Adopt comprehensive whole of government NAPs addressing all forms of VAWG, including emerging issues and forms of violence such as online violence, with a focus on long-term prevention, response and recovery.

2

Ensure adequate funding through multi-sectoral budgeting across all relevant sectors such as health, education, child protection, social protection, among others.

3

Fund women's rights organizations, specialist services, community-based organizations and feminist movements through quality, core, flexible and sustainable resources.

4

Ensure robust governance and accountability mechanisms ensuring participation and meaningful engagement of civil society and women's rights organizations.

END NOTES

¹ UN Women (forthcoming) *UN Women Global Database on Violence against Women: State Measures Report*. NB: Analysis is based on data available in the Database as of October 2024.

² UN Women (forthcoming) *UN Women Global Database on Violence against Women: State Measures Report*. NB: Analysis is based on data available in the Database as of October 2024.

UN WOMEN EXISTS TO ADVANCE WOMEN'S RIGHTS, GENDER EQUALITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS.

As the lead UN entity on gender equality and secretariat of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, we shift laws, institutions, social behaviors and services to close the gender gap and build an equal world for all women and girls.

Our partnerships with governments, women's movements and the private sector coupled with our coordination of the broader United Nations translate progress into lasting changes. We make strides forward for women and girls in four areas: leadership, economic empowerment, freedom from violence, and women, peace and security as well as humanitarian action.

UN Women keeps the rights of women and girls at the centre of global progress – always, everywhere. Because gender equality is not just what we do. It is who we are.



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