

UN WOMEN STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-2029

CREATING AN EQUAL WORLD FOR ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS



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CREATING AN EQUAL WORLD FOR ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS

UN Women

New York, October 2025







UN WOMEN DELIVERS FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS WORLDWIDE

UN Women is the global lead for gender equality and women's empowerment and rights. We are an advocate, a systems-shifter, a trusted partner and the United Nations' engine of accountability for all women and girls.

Our Strategic Plan 2026–2029 comes at a pivotal moment. The world is failing women and girls on every measure of gender equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Yet UN Women's commitment to make the world a better place for all women and girls remains unshaken. Amid rapid change, persistent inequalities, escalating crises and growing backlash against gender equality, our mandate has never been more relevant.

We are ready to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow – through our programmes, our wide-ranging partnerships, our leading role in the United Nations, and our ability to translate global norms into meaningful changes in women's lives. By stepping up action with clarity and courage, we will realize a world of equality, empowerment and rights for all women and girls, everywhere.

THE WORLD FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS TODAY

WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP AND DECISION-MAKING

As of January 2025, women hold only

27.2%

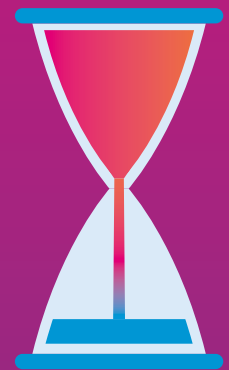
of seats in national parliaments; **102 countries have never had a woman head of state or government.**



Globally, women occupy just of

30%

managerial positions. **At the current pace, it will take nearly a century to reach parity.**

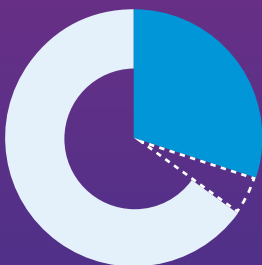


WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT IN RESILIENT ECONOMIES

Women's share of global income remains below

35%

with only a 5% increase since 1990.



On average, women devote

2.5 times

as many hours per day to **unpaid domestic and care work as men.**



By 2050, under a worst-case climate scenario, up to

158.3 million

more women and girls could be **pushed into extreme poverty.**



WOMEN AND GIRLS FREE FROM VIOLENCE

1 IN 8

women aged 15–49 (12.5%) has been subjected to physical and/or sexual violence by a partner **in the last 12 months**.



Nearly

1 IN 5

young women aged 20–24 (18.6%) was married **before age 18**.

Each year,

4 million

girls undergo female genital mutilation, **with more than 2 million before age 5**.



WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY, AND HUMANITARIAN ACTION



In 2024,

676 million

women and girls lived within 50 km of a deadly conflict event, **the highest number since the 1990s**.

As of 2025, **113 countries** have national action plans on women, peace and security, up from 32 in 2011, but only

28%

increased funds to implement them.



In recent years, women have held only about

1 IN 10

peace negotiator roles (9.6%) and slightly more than

1 IN 8

mediator roles (13.7%).

UN Women. 2025. Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals: The Gender Snapshot 2025. New York: United Nations.

UN Women. 2024. Trends Analysis for the Strategic Plan. Internal document.

United Nations. 2024. Report of the Secretary-General on Women, Peace and Security. S/2024/671. New York.

Wodon, Q., A. Onagoruwa, C. Malé, C. Montenegro, H. Nguyen and B. de la Brière. 2020. How Large Is the Gender Dividend? Measuring Selected Impacts and Costs of Gender Inequality. The Cost of Gender Inequality Notes Series. Washington, DC: The World Bank.

GENDER EQUALITY IS NOT JUST WHAT WE DO: IT IS WHO WE ARE

In everything we do, UN Women advances human rights and fundamental freedoms, with and for women and girls. Our most fundamental commitment is to non-discrimination – and to breaking the hold of inequalities related to gender, age, ethnicity, race, disability and so on. By challenging injustice across societies and generations, and in the corridors of power, we disrupt chronic cycles of exclusion.

UN Women coordinates the combined expertise and reach of the UN system to achieve gender equality, setting standards and fostering accountability. We back countries in translating global commitments into meaningful strides for women and girls. We bring together partners from all walks of life to amplify results. High-impact programme delivery, operational efficiency, integrity and value for money drive performance that makes the very best use of our resources.



OUR TRIPLE MANDATE: AGREEMENT, ACTION, IMPACT

UN Women's triple mandate – normative support, UN system coordination and operational work – is unique in the United Nations. First, we help countries set gender equality norms and standards. Second, we collaborate with partners to translate these norms and standards into concrete actions, realizing better lives for women and girls. Third, we marshal the collective support of the entire United Nations to amplify and reinforce action on gender equality commitments at the national, regional and global levels.

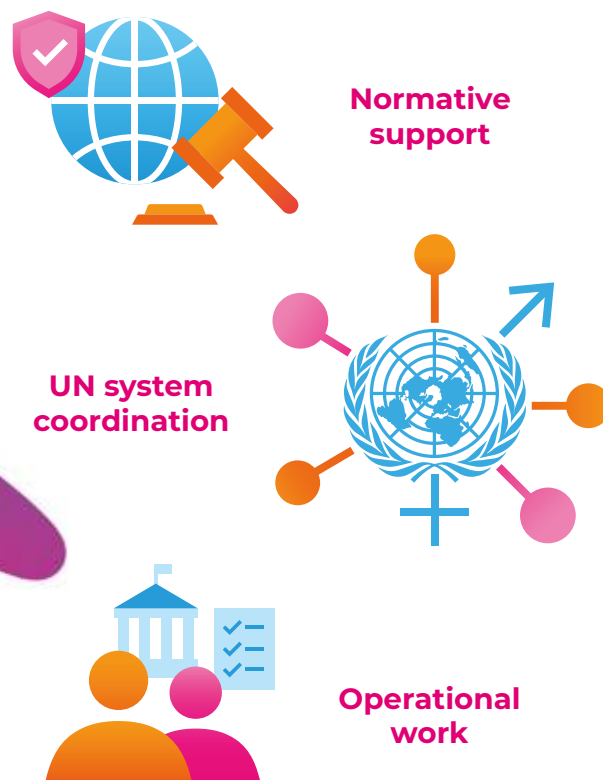
UN system coordination: Leading UN action for gender equality

UN Women leads and brings the entities of the UN system together to achieve greater collective results for gender equality. We act across development issues, humanitarian responses, and efforts to build and maintain peace. Gender mainstreaming, joint programming and institutional mechanisms forge more collaborative, high-impact interventions. Enhanced standards and measurements strengthen accountability for rapid progress for women and girls.

To step up momentum, the Strategic Plan 2026–2029 makes UN system coordination central to delivering on all parts of our triple mandate. Every thematic area and result spells out where UN Women will lead and support the UN system to act for gender equality.

This “policy-to-practice” loop shapes global gender equality norms grounded in local realities. As communities apply these norms, lasting, meaningful changes gain momentum and ripple outward, reaching the world at large.

The Strategic Plan 2026–2029 deploys the full power of our triple mandate. The plan deepens our support for institutions, both national and international, to implement laws and policies and challenge discriminatory practices, with and for women and girls. Integrated programming, connecting diverse partners and interrelated issues, is ambitious in scale and designed for impact.



LESSONS THAT SHAPE OUR FUTURE

The Strategic Plan 2026–2029 builds on robust evidence of what UN Women does best. Audits, evaluations, reviews and broad consultations have all affirmed: Our triple mandate is our most distinctive strength.

Amid widespread pushback against gender equality and women's rights, our partners have called on us to defend and uphold norms and standards agreed by UN Member States. This normative part of our mandate is more critical than ever.

Further, as needs mount and funds falter globally, we must continually sharpen our programmes and stick to our priorities. We must reach women and girls facing the worst discrimination and gender disparities – and invest in changes they see as most likely to transform their lives.

UN Women is well-positioned to galvanize collective results, leveraging substantial recent gains in coordinating the UN system. These include unprecedented attention to gender equality in system-wide policies guiding all aspects of humanitarian action, peace and sustainable development cooperation.









FOUR PATHS TO PROGRESS

Our Strategic Plan 2026–2029 achieves results in four thematic areas most critical to women and girls – and most closely connected to gender equality.

FOR ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS:

FULL AND EQUAL DECISION- MAKING POWER

Realizing the rights of all women and girls demands equal participation in decision-making. UN Women invests in women's leadership at every level, public and private, to shape decisions and steer institutions, drawing on proven advances in over 100 countries. Growing evidence demonstrates that public policies improve when women are meaningfully involved.

In more countries and institutions than ever, UN Women's advocacy for temporary special measures (quotas) leads to gender parity in leadership, whether in elected offices or on corporate boards. Partnerships with public institutions yield changes in services and spending based on what women say they want and need. All successes stem from our enduring solidarity with women leaders and women's rights organizations. Together, we drive change and deepen accountability.



The systematic dismantling of discriminatory laws, policies, practices and other barriers catalyses economies that work for women. UN Women supports gender-responsive and rights-based macroeconomic policies and financial ecosystems that fully support women's economic empowerment.

Our collaborations with governments, trade unions, women's movements, cooperatives and businesses transform care systems. We help open opportunities for decent work and entrepreneurship, and promote equal pay. We strive to advance equal access to, ownership and control of resources, including finance and technology. Lasting ties with grassroots, urban, rural and Indigenous women amplify their voices and agency in climate and environmental action, including to achieve just access to livelihoods, land and other assets central to resilience and well-being.

FOR ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS:

ECONOMIC JUSTICE AND RIGHTS



FOR ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS:

ZERO VIOLENCE

It takes everyone to end all forms of violence against women and girls, the most pervasive human rights violation. UN Women weaves together the efforts of governments, civil society and the private sector to prevent violence and provide services for protection, justice and care. We put survivors at the forefront, always.

Through UN Women and women's rights activists, countries have broken the long silence on violence. It is now a leading public priority, buoyed by laws, funds and action plans. Our expanded focus on prevention adds impetus by challenging harmful behaviours and the attitudes behind them, and engaging men and boys as allies. With women's organizations at the vanguard in ending violence against women and girls, UN Women invests in their power for advocacy and impact.



UN Women champions bringing women's rights and leadership to the centre of peace, security and humanitarian action, in line with Security Council resolutions and other international commitments. We support Member States in upholding these commitments while working with humanitarian partners to meet priorities defined by women and girls in the world's worst crises.

Collaboration with women leaders builds peace in their communities and helps more women and girls access lifesaving services and the means to rebuild their lives. Expanded funding for women's rights organizations and women human rights defenders deepens solidarity to push past backlash against gender equality and towards justice. Together, we demand accountability for conflict-related sexual violence and other grave violations.

FOR ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS:

PEACE, SECURITY AND HUMANITARIAN ACTION







Revving up partnerships: Who and how



Transformative change, UN Women's reason for being, does not happen by flying solo. We are doubling down on partnerships and expanding our alliances. As importantly, we are changing how we partner – with governments, women's rights organizations, the United Nations, and more. Active, principled, accountable private sector engagement is a linchpin for solutions in workplaces, marketplaces and communities.

We work with and through others to ignite lasting change – influencing the practices, policies and financing decisions of diverse actors, so that they themselves become agents of change. All elements of the Strategic Plan 2026–2029 include partnership strategies to diversify alliances and accelerate far-reaching, durable advances. Amid constrained resources, inspiring people and institutions everywhere to take a stand for women's rights and gender equality is how we scale up impact.

THREE TRIGGERS OF LASTING CHANGE

Three Strategic Plan outcomes tell a simple story of what UN Women intends to achieve: Shift political, economic, social and other systems – and we will all come closer to gender equality.

NORMS, LAWS AND POLICIES UPHOLD THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN AND GIRLS

Country by country, UN Women supports UN Member States striving to align all laws and policies with globally agreed norms and standards on gender equality and women's rights. These norms can then be translated into meaningful changes in the daily lives of women and girls. We routinely monitor progress, including advances on the global Sustainable Development Goals. Our research and data offer expert evidence for policymaking and accountability. We also support the continued evolution of global standards, across intergovernmental forums, including the UN Commission on the Status of Women.



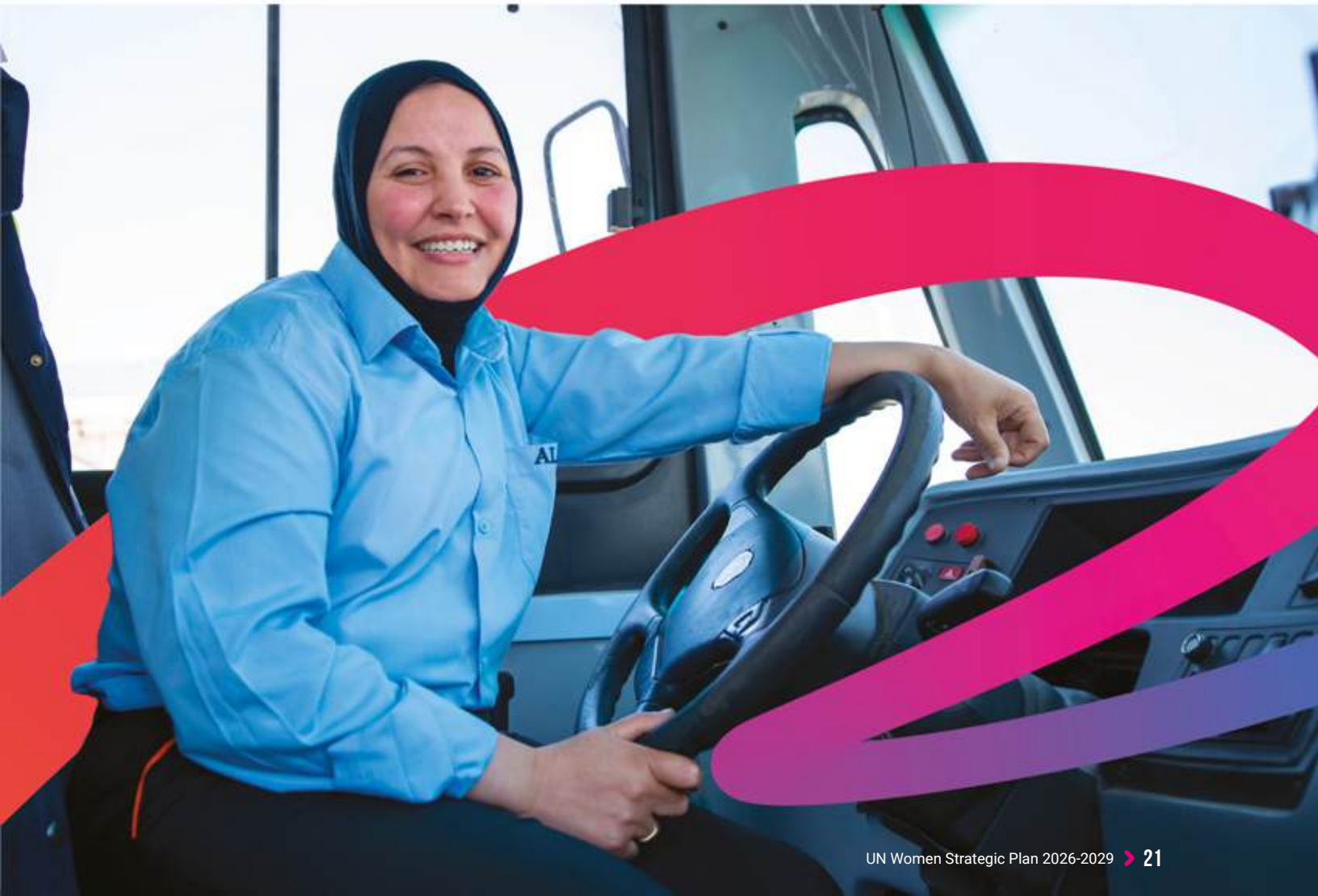
INSTITUTIONS ACT TO ADVANCE GENDER EQUALITY

UN Women partners with a spectrum of institutions to advance gender equality, comprising national women's machineries, sectoral ministries and agencies, parliaments and local governments, the private sector, the UN system and more. We generate compelling data and analysis, develop expert skills, and bolster accountability for change. We alter patriarchal institutional practices and promote positive social norms, while deepening understanding of how inclusive, stable and thriving societies depend entirely on gender equality. Gender-responsive planning and budgeting unlock public finance for women and girls. In private markets, our pioneering innovations align capital flows with gender equality goals.



WOMEN HAVE THE POWER TO LEAD, DECIDE AND THRIVE

UN Women opens doors for women to participate and lead in decisions, public and private, without discrimination or fear. All women and girls have equal rights to freely express themselves, make their own choices and obtain quality services as well as equal access to resources and assets – whether in a school or a bank, a health facility or a voting booth. We also invest in building strong networks and movements, amplifying women's collective power to generate change. Our next-generation funding models invest in women's rights organizations as agile, expert and innovative advocates of gender equality, including through the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund and UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women.



A HIGH-IMPACT BUSINESS MODEL FOR GENDER EQUALITY

The Strategic Plan 2026–2029 sets out a path for UN Women to be more focused, nimble, accountable and impactful.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE



UN Women is accountable, transparent and trusted by all. Why? Because our culture revolves around performance and continuous improvement. From our headquarters to our country offices, robust financial management controls and results reporting keep delivery on track, visible and measurable. We achieve value for money while meeting all obligations to our partners.

RESOURCE PARTNERSHIPS AND COMMUNICATIONS



UN Women's results are powered by a blend of core contributions and earmarked resources. These are drawn from a dynamic, diversified mix of partners, both new and longstanding. Skilled communications and advocacy make us the leading voice, partner of choice and brand for gender equality. Our compelling narrative secures broad, lasting support for our mission.

BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION AND INNOVATION



UN Women's next-generation business model propels agile, efficient performance. It links strategic planning, resource mobilization, results delivery and communications so that we seamlessly work as one. A pivot to regions and countries brings our support closer to the women and girls we serve. Strategic foresight and digital tools keep us forward-looking and future-ready.

EMPOWERED PEOPLE



UN Women's empowering culture values diverse, high-performing leaders who embody UN values. Our human resources standards and practices model gender equality. Strategic workforce planning, talent management, leadership development and innovation boost performance and accountability.

HIGH-IMPACT PROGRAMMES



With results-based management, we make the greatest gains with the funds we have. We plan for and monitor results that add up, supported by integrated systems. Harmonized reporting provides insights at a glance and ensures accountability. Larger and more impactful programmes, including through our country strategies and joint UN programming, allow us to aim higher and deliver more effectively. We constantly learn so that if we need to manage risk or evolve for better results – we do.



OUR STRATEGIC PLAN

Sustainable Development Goals | CEDAW | Beijing

VISION



Achieve
of all wo
enjoyme

IMPACT AREAS



Women's
leadership
and decision
making



Women's
economic
empowermen
in resilient
economies

SYSTEMIC OUTCOMES

Norms and standards
that uphold the rights of
all women and girls are
protected, strengthened
and translated into laws
and policies



**Institutions are
accountable** to all women
and girls, with financing,
data and practices that
support gender equality



UN system and partners deliver

ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY OUTPUTS



Accountability
and
performance



Resource
partnerships and
communications

UN 2.0:

Data

Digital

Innovation

Strateg

2026-2029 AT A GLANCE

ing Platform | UN Security Council Resolution 1325

gender equality, the empowerment
men and girls and the full
ent of their human rights



Women and
girls free from
violence



Women,
peace and
security, and
humanitarian
action



More women and girls
can exercise their agency
and have equitable access
to quality services,
resources and assets



r together for women and girls



UN WOMEN'S
TRIPLE
MANDATE



Normative
support



UN system
coordination



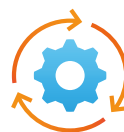
Operational
work



Business
transformation
and innovation



Empowered
people



Programme
effectiveness through
results-based
management

ic foresight

Behavioural science

Forward-thinking culture

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 behaviours 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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