Report of the UN Secretary-General on Women and Peace and Security 2025:

KEY HIGHLIGHTS



GLOBAL CONTEXT IN 2024: RISING CONFLICT AND MILITARY SPENDING IMPACTED MORE WOMEN AND GIRLS



61 active conflicts involving at least one State, the highest number since 1946



World military expenditure exceeded USD 2.7 trillion - the steepest year-on-year rise since at least the end of the cold war



676 million women and girls lived within 50km of a deadly conflict event



Over 60 million forcibly displaced and stateless women and girls face elevated risks of genderbased violence



Over 85 million children affected by crises are out of school, of whom 51.9% are girls



In Afghanistan, 8 out of 10 young Afghan women are excluded from education, jobs or training



More than 280 million people are experiencing acute food insecurity



In some contexts, such as in Gaza and the Sudan, tens of thousands are at risk of dying of starvation



In early 2025, Close to 1/4 of countries reported a backlash on women's rights

HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE: GROWING BACKLASH AND STEEP RISE IN VIOLENCE

Globally, four times more



women and children were killed in armed conflicts between 2023-2024, compared with 2021-2022



7 out of every 10 women killed in conflicts worldwide died in Gaza

Conflict-related sexual violence documented by the UN increased by 87% between 2022-2024



In 2024, sexual violence against girls increased by 35% compared with 2023

Women and girls are affected by high levels of reproductive violence



including forced sterilizations, forced pregnancy and deliberate destruction or blocking of sexual and reproductive healthcare

In 2023.

58% of maternal deaths, 50% of newborn deaths, and 51% of stillbirths occurred worldwide in 29 countries with humanitarian crises



these numbers are expected to significantly worsen*

The work of women human rights defenders and peacebuilders has become much more dangerous



Since 2022, the Women's Peace and **Humanitarian Fund** has supported 777 women human rights defenders

Mental health

receives less than 2% of global health financing

even though issues relating to mental health account for 20% of health issues reported in emergencies

COMMITMENTS TO WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN PEACE PROCESSES HAVE CONTINUED TO INCREASE

The commitment to advance women's full, equal, meaningful and safe participation is now firmly integrated into

Multiple Security Council resolutions

Outcomes adopted by other intergovernmental bodies, including in the Pact for the Future

Regional policies and national action plans on women and peace and security (WPS)

113 **National** Action Plans on WPS as of June 2025

55%

include explicit commitments on women's participation in peace processes

set out a dedicated commitment to support women mediators

As of September 2025,

adopters – Member States, international and regional organizations and other mediating actors - have signed the UN Secretary-General's Common Plédge for Women's Full, Equal and Meaningful Participation in Peace Processes

Committed to concrete steps to advance women's participation in all peace processes in which they are involved

BUT MANY CHALLENGES REMAIN IN TRANSLATING COMMITMENTS INTO GENDER-RESPONSIVE PEACE PROCESSES AND OUTCOMES

Women's representation as negotiators,



mediators and signatories in major peace processes globally remains far below the set goals*

In 2024, globally

Only 7% of negotiators on average were women

14% of mediators on average were women

20% of signatories to peace agreements were women

These averages are significantly influenced by a small number of peace processes, in particular the peace processes in Colombia and the Philippines, which featured the highest levels of women's representation

Recommendations:

Minimum 1/3 target for women's participation in mediation and peace processes set by the UN

Parity goal for decision-making recommended by the CEDAW**

Major conflicts are increasingly negotiated in closed and exclusive formats, with only partial agreements reached

Gender perspectives are more commonly found in comprehensive peace agreements

In 2024, in the United Nations-led or co-led peace processes***

2 women served as lead mediators

45% of the United Nations mediation team members were women

In 2024, in the United Nations-led, co-led or supported peace and constitution-making processes****

of negotiators or delegates, on 18% average, were women, a drop from 19% in 2023 and 23% in 2020

Of 36 peace agreements reached in 2024



around the world, 31% included at least one provision with reference to women, girls, gender or sexual violence



The agreements with gender provisions were limited to only four processes in three countries: Colombia, South Sudan and the Sudan

IN ADDITION,

- In South Sudan, the UN Mission collaborated with UN-Women to facilitate the participation of 5 women in the Tumaini Peace Initiative in Nairobi
- In the Great Lakes region, the UN, the African Union, and women's organization succeeded in advocating the inclusion of 2 women mediators in the joint East African Community-South African **Development Community peace initiative**

^{*}Based on the initial data collected for the period from 2020-2024
** The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
*** These included four active peace processes: the Geneva International Discussions, two processes relating to Libya and one process in the Sudan
**** These included the four UN-led or co-led active peace processes, two UN-supported peace processes in Colombia and two UN-supported
constitution-making processes in Somalia and South Sudan

PEACEKEEPING: NAVIGATING THE PATH FROM CONFLICT TO PEACE



The percentage of women has more than doubled across most categories of the United Nations uniformed gender parity strategy since 2018

- Just above 10% of all uniformed personnel across UN missions are women
- 4 out of 8 senior leadership positions in the police components of UN missions are held by women
- Only 1 woman is currently heading a military component
- 44% of peacekeeping facilities are fully compliant with gender-responsive camp desian

The shrinking presence of UN peacekeeping has led to a security vacuum and the escalation of violence



Women and girls are more vulnerable to the predations of armed groups



The ability to **monitor violations** of women's rights has weakened



Sustaining support to women-led **networks** – that have proven effective in reducing community violence - has become more challenging

FINANCING FOR PEACE, DEVELOPMENT AND GENDER EQUALITY IS DROPPING, **EVEN AS NEEDS ARE RISING**

Preliminary data from OECD* indicate that



in 2024, for the first time in six years, international aid from official donors fell by 7.1% in real terms, compared with 2023

Of the local women-led groups surveyed by UN-Women in crisis settings in March 2025,



said that their operations were 90% financially affected by the recent funding reductions

expected to shut down within six months if current conditions persist

The **sharp reduction in donor funding** across development and humanitarian aid will have a real cost on the lives of women and girls



Thousands of health clinics are expected to close



Already, women in crisis zones are being forced to give birth without medicines, midwives, or equipment



Shipments of lifesaving medical supplies to refugee camps are being disrupted



Many women and girls are dying and more will die



Some women will be left with no choice but to adopt dangerous coping mechanisms

In 2024,

The Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund approved USD 116 million for **projects**, compared with USD 202 million in 2023



Of this, 43% was focused on supporting gender-equality in 2024

The Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund raised USD 65.9 million for local women's organizations and activists on the front lines

The latest available data show that in 2022-2023, bilateral aid to contexts with high and extreme fragility stood at USD 50 billion on average per year

> **Only 5.2%** - or USD 2.5 billion - was dedicated to gender equality as a principal objective

> Mere 0.4% - or USD 186 million was dedicated to women's rights organizations and movements

Recommendation:

Meet the minimum targets for funding recommended by the United Nations: 1% of official development assistance channelled to women's organizations in conflict-affected countries and 15% to gender equality as a principal objective

ALTHOUGH 2024 WAS A SIGNIFICANT ELECTORAL YEAR, PROGRESS IN TERMS OF WOMEN'S POLITICAL LEADERSHIP WAS MINIMAL

As of September 2025, only 29 countries globally had a woman head of state or government



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102 countries have never had a woman at the helm

HOWEVER,

Notable historic firsts were achieved in 2024, including the first directly elected women Presidents in Mexico, Namibia and North Macedonia

In conflict-affected countries,



Only 21% of Cabinet ministers are women – lower than the 23% global average

20% of parliamentarians are women – below the 27% global average

Only 18% of seats in local deliberative bodies are held by women – nearly half the 35.5% global average

As of 2024,



women made up **only 21%** of Permanent
Representatives to the
UN, with just 7% of all
ambassadors since
1947 being women



73 countries have never appointed a woman as Permanent Representative

Recommendation:

Require **targets and quotas** for women's full, equal, meaningful, and safe participation in peace and political processes

WHILE IMPUNITY REMAINS WIDESPREAD, CRIMES AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS ARE NO LONGER BURIED IN SILENCE BUT ARE DOCUMENTED

One of the clearest examples of



progress in WPS – over the past 25 years – has been the **investigation and prosecution** of international crimes against women and girls



Result of decades of legal action, advocacy and activism led by survivors and women's organizations and important jurisprudence built by national and international courts

Over the past 15 years,



every commission of inquiry or fact-finding mission mandated by the UN has included expertise on the investigation of gender-based crimes provided by UN-Women



The UN has expanded its support to national accountability mechanisms, and every year, gender justice milestones are achieved

During recent years,





reparations and interim reparative measures, for example, in the Central African Republic, Iraq, Ukraine, and Kosovo

Women's access to justice is still nearly non-existent in many conflict-affected settings

Recommendation:

Hold accountable those responsible for all acts of gender-based persecution, reproductive violence, and conflict-related sexual violence

INVESTMENTS IN WOMEN'S ECONOMIC SECURITY DURING TRANSITIONS FROM CONFLICT TO PEACE REMAIN UNDER-PRIORITIZED

Women in fragile environments are
7.7 times more likely to live in extreme poverty compared with those in stable regions

UN-Women's study from 2024 shows that

Only
18% of the nearly 1,000 social
protection measures adopted
by governments across 171
countries in the months that
followed the rise of global
inflation targeted women's
economic security

In Afghanistan and Yemen, women's representation in the workforce is less than 10%, the lowest in the world

In the Sudan, women earn 82% less than men, one of the world's widest gaps

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