



**Implementation of the
Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) and the
outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (2000)**

in the context of the

**twentieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women
and the adoption of the
Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action
2015**

Guidance note for the preparation of national reviews

I. BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

In 2015, the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women will carry out a review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995) and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (2000).

In resolution [E/RES/2013/18](#), the United Nations Economic and Social Council called upon all States to undertake comprehensive national-level reviews of the progress made and challenges encountered in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly. Paragraphs three to five of the resolution state the following:

“Decides that at its fifty-ninth session, in 2015, the Commission will undertake a review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, including current challenges that affect the implementation of the Platform for Action and the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women, as well as opportunities for strengthening gender equality and the empowerment of women in the post-2015 development agenda through the integration of a gender perspective;

Calls upon all States to undertake comprehensive national-level reviews of the progress made and challenges encountered in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, and encourages the regional commissions to undertake regional reviews so that the outcomes of intergovernmental processes at the regional level can feed into the 2015 review;

Strongly encourages Governments to continue to support the role and contribution of civil society, in particular non-governmental organizations and women's organizations, in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, and in this regard calls upon Governments to collaborate with relevant stakeholders at all levels of preparations for the 2015 review so as to benefit from their experience and expertise[;]"

In addition to a review and appraisal of progress in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, the reviews are also an opportunity for consultation and awareness-raising. Therefore, in preparing the national reviews, Member States are encouraged to undertake a consultative process with a broad range of stakeholders within and outside government.

UN-Women and the five United Nations regional commissions are collaborating in the review and appraisal process. The regional commissions will use the national reviews to prepare regional assessment reports that will be submitted to regional intergovernmental processes in the course of 2014. All national reviews will be posted on the website of UN-Women, with links to the websites of the respective regional commissions. They will also contribute to the global review and appraisal to be prepared by UN-Women, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, to be submitted to the fifty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

The present **guidance note** aims to assist in and facilitate the preparation of these national reviews.

II. GUIDANCE ON THE CONTENT OF NATIONAL REVIEWS

National reviews should place emphasis on **implementation** and contain concrete, evidence-based assessments on the **impact** of actions taken and of results achieved, supplemented by evaluations, research publications, reports, as well as qualitative and quantitative data. Countries are encouraged to discuss progress and achievements as well as setbacks and challenges. The reviews should also discuss **future plans and initiatives** to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women.

The national reviews should, **in section one**, cover the period since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. They should be informed by past reviews of

progress, i.e. those conducted in 2000, 2005 and 2010. A variety of other sources can be drawn from, including national Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) reports, the surveys prepared for the 2014 review of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), reports submitted by States parties under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the global review of gender statistics programmes in countries administered by the United Nations regional commissions and presented to the UN Statistical Commission in February 2013¹, and other national assessments. The national reviews need not reproduce the findings of these, but rather build on them to produce an integrated and comprehensive analysis, reflecting long-term trends, opportunities and challenges, and results achieved since the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly.

In **section two**, the national reviews should address progress in the twelve critical areas of concern of the Platform for Action, with an emphasis on the years since 2009.

Section three should cover issues related to data and statistics. It should complement the results of the global review of gender statistics programmes in countries presented to the UN Statistical Commission in February 2013.

Section four should address key emerging issues in terms of opportunities and challenges in implementing the Platform for Action and additional priorities, including recommendations to strengthen gender equality and the empowerment of women in the current discussions on Sustainable Development Goals and the post-2015 development agenda.

Whenever possible, information should be provided on the situation of particular groups of women, such as rural women, older women, women with disabilities, indigenous women, women living with HIV and AIDS, and any other groups that might face multiple forms of discrimination and disadvantage. Countries are encouraged to provide information on indicators used at the national and local level to monitor the situation of gender equality and empowerment of women.

¹ The global review is a comprehensive assessment of gender statistics in national statistical systems developed by the UN Statistics Division in consultation with the regional commissions and finalized by a task team of the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics. It was administered by regional commissions in their respective regions and contained 30 questions related to the planning, production and use of gender statistics. For results, see <http://undocs.org/E/CN.3/2013/10>.

Structure and content of national reviews

National reviews should be structured according to the following sections and address the following guiding questions:

Section One: Overview analysis of achievements and challenges since 1995 **(Suggested length: 10 pages)**

- a) What are the country's three to five major achievements in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly?

Why are these considered to be the major achievements? Please provide evidence that supports this assessment.

What has contributed to this success? Describe measures taken in terms of policies and mechanisms to maintain or build on this success.

- b) What are the country's three to five major challenges in the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly?

Why are these considered to be the major challenges?

Describe the strategy (ies) that is (are) in place to address the challenges?

- c) What setbacks/reversals in progress towards gender equality and the empowerment of women have been experienced since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (if different from those already identified in b)?

What were the major factors that caused the setbacks?

What mitigation measures or other actions, if any, have been implemented to counter the setbacks?

- d) What have been the main constitutional, legislative and/or legal developments in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women?

What laws and/or regulations remain in place (or have been introduced) that could have adverse effects on promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women in the country?

- e) What is the approximate share of the national budget that is invested in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women?

Describe efforts to increase and track national planning and budgetary allocations related to achieving gender equality and empowerment of women, in preparation of development plans and budgets at national, regional/provincial and local levels.

- f) What mechanisms are in place for regular dialogue between Government and civil society? If mechanisms are in place, briefly describe them.

Do non-governmental organizations, including civil society organizations, women's organizations, academia, faith-based organizations, the private sector and other actors participate formally in the mechanisms established to monitor and implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action?

If no, what are the main obstacles preventing the establishment of such mechanisms?

- g) What main in-country, bilateral, sub-regional and/or regional cooperation is the country engaged in to support sharing of knowledge and experiences in the monitoring and implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly?

What results have been achieved through such efforts and what lessons have been learnt?

What is the perceived value of the cooperation?

In what ways could cooperation be improved to strengthen sharing of knowledge and experiences in implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action?

- h) How, and to what extent, have the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) overall, and in particular the gender-related MDGs, facilitated or strengthened the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action?

Section Two: Progress in the implementation of the critical areas of concern of the Platform for Action since 2009
(Suggested length: 25 pages)

- a) What is the status of progress in **each of the twelve critical areas** of concern and their strategic objectives, and relevant sections of the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly? Please provide concrete supporting evidence, including statistical data and other relevant sources.

Has any of these areas been supported by legal measures, national policies, strategies, plans, programmes and/or projects developed and implemented since 2009? Please provide examples of such measures.

Were these measures monitored in the relevant areas? Please provide statistical data and assessments on the results achieved through these measures.

- b) Describe the obstacles, gaps and challenges since 2009 in implementing the critical areas of concern.

Were there any countercyclical measures introduced in your country since 2009 to mitigate the consequences of global economic and financial crisis?

If so, did these measures incorporate a gender perspective and/or include women as a targeted group?

- c) Have austerity policies/measures, such as tax increases, cuts in public expenditure, or public sector downsizing, been introduced in your country in the aftermath of the 2007/2008 financial crisis?

If so, to what extent have they affected the critical areas of concern? Please describe the effects of such measures on key indicators, such as participation of women and men in social and economic activity, including education, training, participation in labour markets, unpaid work, access to social protection, access to credit, or entrepreneurship.

Section Three: Data and statistics

(Suggested length: 5 pages)

- a) Has a core set of national indicators for monitoring progress in gender equality been established? If so, please provide the indicators in an annex.

Where is responsibility for collecting the data located?

If national indicators have not been established, what are the reasons?

- b) Has data collection and compilation on the Minimum Set of Gender Indicators begun, which was agreed by the UN Statistical Commission in 2013? (The link to the list of indicators is provided in Part III.)

If so, what is the status of data collection and compilation? Please describe plans to improve gender-related data collection and compilation at the national level that have been developed.

If not, are there any plans at the national level to begin work based on the Minimum Set? Please describe briefly.

- c) Has data collection and compilation on the nine indicators on violence against women, as agreed by the UN Statistical Commission in 2013, begun? (The list of indicators is provided in Part III).

If so, what is the status of data collection and compilation? Please describe plans that have been developed to produce these indicators at the national level.

If not, are there any plans at the national level to begin work based on these indicators? Please describe briefly.

- d) What processes have been undertaken to collect data on the situation of particular groups of women, such as rural women, older women, women with disabilities, indigenous women, women living with HIV and AIDS, or other groups? Please describe briefly.

Section Four: Emerging priorities
(Suggested length: 2 pages)

- a) What are the key priorities for action over the next three to five years for accelerating implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, and subsequent intergovernmental agreements for the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women at the national level?
- b) What are your country's priorities and recommendations to strengthen gender equality and the empowerment of women in the current discussions on Sustainable Development Goals and the post-2015 development agenda?

Annexes to national reviews

In addition to relevant information not covered elsewhere, the annexes to the national reviews should contain the following:

- information on the **process of preparing the national review**, including an indication of which Government departments and institutions were involved, and consultations held with stakeholders
- detailed **statistical information**, as applicable, on the overall trends discussed in section one, and on all critical areas of concern discussed in section two
- **case studies/good practice examples** of policies and initiatives implemented in any of the **critical areas of concern**, not included elsewhere

- a list of **policies, strategies, action plans and publications**, with links to their location (electronic copies).

III. SUBMISSION OF NATIONAL REVIEWS

States are invited to send their national reviews in hard copy and electronic format in one of the six official United Nations languages to the relevant regional commissions, and to UN-Women, no later than **1 May 2014**.

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Relevant websites and links

Information about past review and appraisal processes is available at the following links, including reports submitted by Member States to the United Nations Secretariat prior to the Fourth World Conference on Women (1995), and for the five-year (2000), ten-year (2005) and fifteen-year (2010) review and appraisal processes.

UN-Women: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/index.html>
ECA: <http://www.uneca.org/beijing15>
ECE: http://www.unece.org/gender/beijing_process.html
ECLAC: <http://www.eclac.cl/cgi-bin/getprod.asp?xml=/mujer/noticias/paginas/8/36338/P36338.xml&xsl=/mujer/tpl/p18f.xsl&base=/mujer/tpl/top-bottom.xsl>
ESCAP: <http://www.unescapsdd.org/gender/publication/bangkok-declaration-beijing15>
http://www.unescap.org/EDC/English/IntergovMeetings/BPA/BPA_Rep.pdf
ESCWA: <http://www.escwa.un.org/information/meetingdetails.asp?referenceNum=1065E>

Information about the 2015 review and appraisal process will be posted at the following sites, including national reviews.

UN-Women: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw59-2015>
ECA: forthcoming
ECE: http://www.unece.org/gender/beijing_process.html
ECLAC: forthcoming
ESCAP: <http://www.unescapsdd.org/beijing20>
ESCWA: forthcoming

Reports submitted by States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women are available on the website of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, treaty body database, at <http://tb.ohchr.org/default.aspx>.

Minimum set of gender indicators

The Minimum Set of Gender Indicators can be accessed in the following report (Annex II):
<http://undocs.org/E/CN.3/2013/10>

Violence against women indicators

The nine violence against women indicators are as follows:

1. Total and age specific rate of women subjected to physical violence in the last 12 months by severity of violence, relationship to the perpetrator and frequency
2. Total and age specific rate of women subjected to physical violence during lifetime by severity of violence, relationship to the perpetrator and frequency
3. Total and age specific rate of women subjected to sexual violence in the last 12 months by severity of violence, relationship to the perpetrator and frequency
4. Total and age specific rate of women subjected to sexual violence during lifetime by severity of violence, relationship to the perpetrator and frequency
5. Total and age specific rate of ever-partnered women subjected to sexual and/or physical violence by current or former intimate partner in the last 12 months by frequency
6. Total and age specific rate of ever-partnered women subjected to sexual and/or physical violence by current or former intimate partner during lifetime by frequency
7. Total and age specific rate of ever-partnered women subjected to psychological violence in the past 12 months by the intimate partner
8. Total and age specific rate of ever-partnered women subjected to economic violence in the past 12 months by the intimate partner
9. Total and age specific rate of women subjected to female genital mutilation

These indicators can be accessed in the following report:

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/meetings/vaw/docs/finalreport.pdf>.

Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action – critical areas of concern and strategic objectives

- A. Women and poverty
 - Strategic objective A.1. Review, adopt and maintain macroeconomic policies and development strategies that address the needs and efforts of women in poverty.
 - Strategic objective A.2. Revise laws and administrative practices to ensure women's equal rights and access to economic resources.
 - Strategic objective A.3. Provide women with access to savings and credit mechanisms and institutions.
 - Strategic objective A.4. Develop gender-based methodologies and conduct research to address the feminization of poverty.

- B. Education and training of women
 - Strategic objective B.1. Ensure equal access to education.
 - Strategic objective B.2. Eradicate illiteracy among women.
 - Strategic objective B.3. Improve women's access to vocational training, science and technology, and continuing education.
 - Strategic objective B.4. Develop non-discriminatory education and training.
 - Strategic objective B.5. Allocate sufficient resources for and monitor the implementation of educational reforms.
 - Strategic objective B.6. Promote lifelong education and training for girls and women.

- C. Women and health
 - Strategic objective C.1. Increase women's access throughout the life cycle to appropriate, affordable and quality health care, information and related services.
 - Strategic objective C.2. Strengthen preventive programmes that promote women's health.
 - Strategic objective C.3. Undertake gender-sensitive initiatives that address sexually transmitted diseases, HIV/AIDS, and sexual and reproductive health issues.
 - Strategic objective C.4. Promote research and disseminate information on women's health.
 - Strategic objective C.5. Increase resources and monitor follow-up for women's health.

- D. Violence against women
 - Strategic objective D.1. Take integrated measures to prevent and eliminate violence against women.
 - Strategic objective D.2. Study the causes and consequences of violence against women and the effectiveness of preventive measures.
 - Strategic objective D.3. Eliminate trafficking in women and assist victims of violence due to prostitution and trafficking.

- E. Women and armed conflict

- Strategic objective E.1. Increase the participation of women in conflict resolution at decision-making levels and protect women living in situations of armed and other conflicts or under foreign occupation.
 - Strategic objective E.2. Reduce excessive military expenditures and control the availability of armaments.
 - Strategic objective E.3. Promote non-violent forms of conflict resolution and reduce the incidence of human rights abuse in conflict situations.
 - Strategic objective E.4. Promote women's contribution to fostering a culture of peace.
 - Strategic objective E.5. Provide protection, assistance and training to refugee women, other displaced women in need of international protection and internally displaced women.
 - Strategic objective E.6. Provide assistance to the women of the colonies and non-self-governing territories.
- F. Women and the economy
- Strategic objective F.1. Promote women's economic rights and independence, including access to employment, appropriate working conditions and control over economic resources.
 - Strategic objective F.2. Facilitate women's equal access to resources, employment, markets and trade.
 - Strategic objective F.3. Provide business services, training and access to markets, information and technology, particularly to low-income women.
 - Strategic objective F.4. Strengthen women's economic capacity and commercial networks.
 - Strategic objective F.5. Eliminate occupational segregation and all forms of employment discrimination.
 - Strategic objective F.6. Promote harmonization of work and family responsibilities for women and men.
- G. Women in power and decision-making
- Strategic objective G.1. Take measures to ensure women's equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision-making.
 - Strategic objective G.2. Increase women's capacity to participate in decision-making and leadership.
- H. Institutional mechanism for the advancement of women
- Strategic objective H.1. Create or strengthen national machineries and other governmental bodies.
 - Strategic objective H.2. Integrate gender perspectives in legislation, public policies, programmes and projects.
 - Strategic objective H.3. Generate and disseminate gender-disaggregated data and information for planning and evaluation.

- I. Human rights of women
 - Strategic objective I.1. Promote and protect the human rights of women, through the full implementation of all human rights instruments, especially the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.
 - Strategic objective I.2. Ensure equality and non-discrimination under the law and in practice.
 - Strategic objective I.3. Achieve legal literacy.

- J. Women and the media
 - Strategic objective J.1. Increase the participation and access of women to expression and decision-making in and through the media and new technologies of communication.
 - Strategic objective J.2. Promote a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media.

- K. Women and the environment
 - Strategic objective K.1. Involve women actively in environmental decision-making at all levels.
 - Strategic objective K.2. Integrate gender concerns and perspectives in policies and programmes for sustainable development.
 - Strategic objective K.3. Strengthen or establish mechanisms at the national, regional, and international levels to assess the impact of development and environmental policies on women.

- L. The girl-child
 - Strategic objective L.1. Eliminate all forms of discrimination against the girl-child.
 - Strategic objective L.2. Eliminate negative cultural attitudes and practices against girls.
 - Strategic objective L.3. Promote and protect the rights of the girl-child and increase awareness of her needs and potential.
 - Strategic objective L.4. Eliminate discrimination against girls in education, skills development and training.
 - Strategic objective L.5. Eliminate discrimination against girls in health and nutrition.
 - Strategic objective L.6. Eliminate the economic exploitation of child labour and protect young girls at work.
 - Strategic objective L.7. Eradicate violence against the girl-child.
 - Strategic objective L.8. Promote the girl-child's awareness of and participation in social, economic and political life.
 - Strategic objective L.9. Strengthen the role of the family in improving the status of the girl-child.