

# UN Women Strategic Plan

2022-2025

Building a Gender-Equal World



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# GLOBAL CONTEXT

As the United Nations entity dedicated to gender equality we work to achieve the empowerment of all women and girls and the full enjoyment of their human rights. Our Strategic Plan 2022-2025 will guide us for the next four years – with an eye toward the 2030 deadline to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Despite progress over the past decade in health and education – more girls go to school and fewer women die in childbirth<sup>1</sup> than ever before – in far too many areas, advances in gender equality have been slow. Globally, less than two thirds of women participate in the labour force,<sup>2</sup> compared to more than 90 percent of men, figures that have not improved in 30 years. A staggering 190 million women of reproductive age who want to avoid pregnancy are not using any contraceptive method.<sup>3</sup> In the last year alone, 1 in 10 women above the age of 15 experienced sexual or physical violence by

an intimate partner.<sup>4</sup> And despite advancements in women’s leadership, women still make up just one quarter of all parliamentary seats and only 24 heads of state or government worldwide.<sup>5</sup>

Our new strategic plan takes effect in the midst of the global COVID-19 pandemic, which has had a disproportionate impact on women and girls and exacerbated all aspects of gender inequality. It is clear that bold actions and increased financing are needed to rebuild better and equal, address the needs of all women and girls and leave no one behind.


1 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 Report of the Secretary-General, New York, March 2020.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 World Health Organization, on behalf of the United Nations Inter-Agency Working Group on Violence Against Women Estimation and Data (VAW-IAWGED), Violence Against Women Prevalence Estimates, 2018 (Geneva, 2021).

5 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 Report of the Secretary-General, New York, March 2020.



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UN Women/Ryan Brown

# OUR TRIPLE MANDATE

As the only UN entity dedicated entirely to gender equality and women's empowerment, UN Women has a special role to play in advancing the global development agenda. Our ability to partner with and engage a range of actors across governments, civil society, the private sector and media, truly sets us apart. Our triple mandate uniquely positions us to:

- **promote coordination across the UN system** to enhance accountability and results for gender equality and women's empowerment;
- **support UN Member States to strengthen global norms and standards for gender equality** and women's empowerment, and to include a gender perspective when advancing other issues; and
- **undertake operational activities at the country and regional levels**, including supporting Member States in developing and implementing gender-responsive laws, policies and strategies that take into account women's lived realities.



UN Women/Ryan Brown

WE ENVISION A  
GENDER-EQUAL  
WORLD IN WHICH  
ALL WOMEN  
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ENJOY THEIR FULL  
HUMAN RIGHTS.

## OUR VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

We envision a gender-equal world in which all women and girls are empowered to enjoy their full human rights. We are guided in this pursuit by the following key principles:

- We seek to **leave no one behind**, by identifying and dismantling structural barriers and unequal power relations, including discriminatory laws, policies, and practices
- We drive **results, coordination and accountability** to advance gender equality across the UN system
- We support **national ownership**, ensuring that efforts to advance gender equality align with countries' national priorities
- We leverage our influence and partnerships to **grow sustainable financing** for gender equality



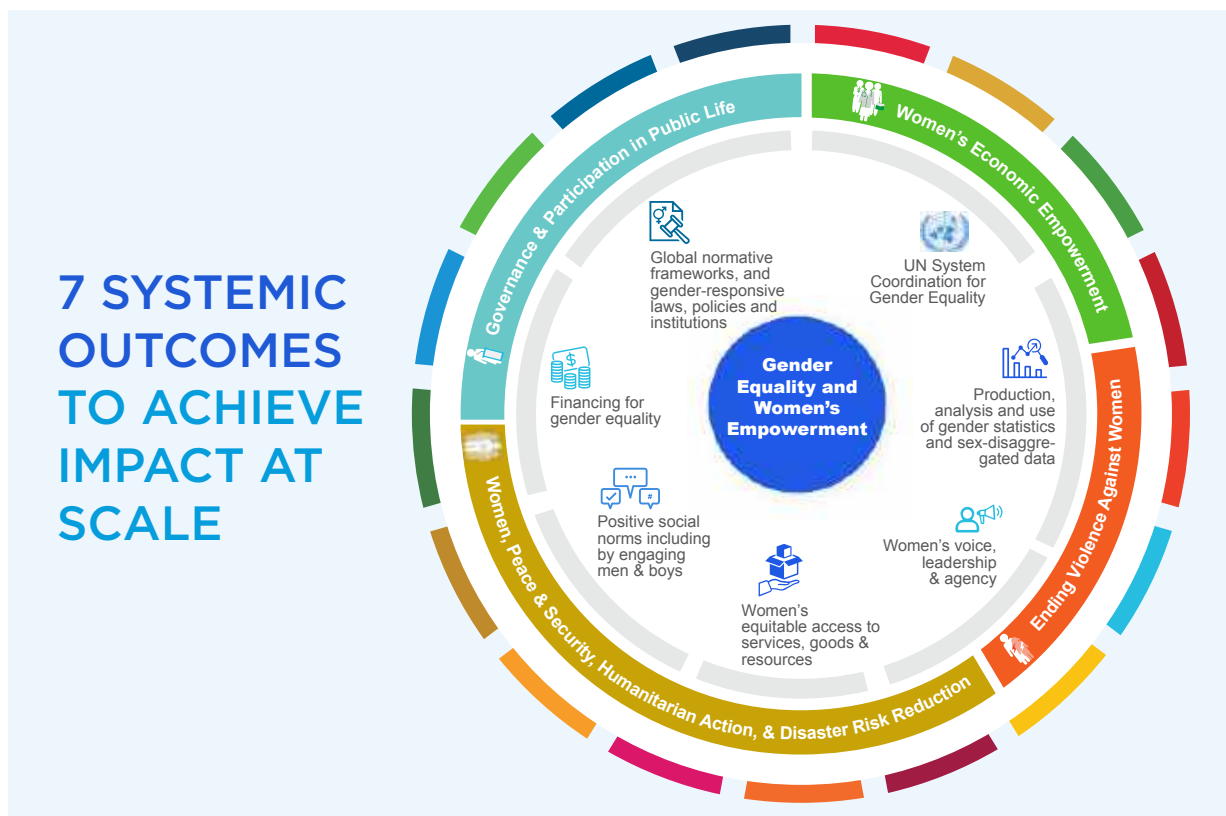


UN Women / David Snyder

# DRIVING CROSS-CUTTING RESULTS THROUGH WORK IN FOUR THEMATIC AREAS

Since our inception, we have grounded our work, organized our teams, and measured our impact in four thematic areas. We also recognize that to address the root causes of gender inequality, we and our partners must increasingly take an intersectional approach – and that our initiatives may not

always fall neatly into one of these categories. To achieve this, our new strategic plan identifies a series of systemic outcomes that we strive to achieve based on our thematic work, and which serve as the building blocks of a more gender-equal world.



# DRIVING IMPACT ACROSS FOUR THEMATIC AREAS

## 1. Governance and participation in public life:

We work with key partners so that all women are able to fully and equally participate in decision-making, and women and girls can benefit from gender-responsive laws, policies, budgets, services, and accountable institutions. We do this by supporting countries' efforts to achieve 50/50 gender balance in decision-making, working to integrate gender equality into budgeting processes, leveraging our role as a convener, and contributing to efforts to repeal discriminatory laws and policies.

**2. Women's economic empowerment:** We work to advance the economic empowerment of women so that they have income security, decent work, and economic autonomy. To achieve this, we partner with a range of allies, from UN agencies to government ministries, to regional bodies and international financial institutions, to women's entrepreneurship organizations. Together, we work to transform the care economy by pushing for women to be recognized – and paid – for their work and by strengthening social protection. We also advocate for equal pay, support women as leaders and entrepreneurs, and work to close the digital divide to ensure women and girls have equal access to opportunities.

**3. Ending violence against women and girls:** We promote integrated approaches to ensure that all women and girls live a life free from all forms of violence. These include supporting Member States to strengthen monitoring for and standards to end violence against women and girls (VAWG), helping to craft and implement national action plans to prevent violence and promote positive social norms, and forging links between groups working on ending violence and experts in other thematic areas, including agriculture, transportation and disaster preparedness. Since 2020, this work has also included ensuring that COVID-19 response and recovery plans include strategies to end VAWG.

**4. Women, peace and security, humanitarian action, and disaster risk reduction:** We work to ensure that women and girls contribute to and have greater influence in building sustainable peace and resilience and benefit equally from conflict and disaster prevention and from humanitarian action. We support Member States and other UN entities in implementing their commitments on this front, facilitate coordination across sectors, and support the development of model policies, programmes and national action plans.







UN Women/Leovigildo Nhampule

# BRIDGING SILOS WITH SEVEN SYSTEMIC OUTCOMES

In recognition of the interconnected nature of our work and the change we seek to drive, our strategic plan defines the following seven desired outcomes, which transcend our four thematic areas and provide the pathways to realize our vision:

1. **To achieve stronger global norms and standards on gender equality and the empowerment of women, as well as more gender-responsive laws, policies, and institutions,** we will provide technical assistance to Member States, produce evidence in support of global commitments, and provide support to public institutions to respond to the needs of women and girls and encourage their participation in policy and agenda setting.
2. **To increase public and private financing policies, strategies and instruments to advance gender equality,** we will provide tailored policy guidance and capacity building on the mobilization, allocation and spending of high-impact financing aligned with gender equality objectives.
3. **To support societies and communities to adopt attitudes and practices that advance gender equality and women's empowerment, including by engaging men and boys,** we will leverage our diverse partnerships to advance positive social norm change.
4. **To create access to better – and more tailored – public goods, services and resources for all women and girls,** we will support the removal of barriers to access, increase relevant expertise among service providers, support women's participation in policy design and decision-making, and promote sustainable investments at all levels.
5. **To ensure that more women and girls exercise their voice, agency and leadership,** we will facilitate the expression of women's voices in decision-making, including by protecting the right to freedom of opinion and expression and women's equal rights to engage in public life.
6. **To generate better knowledge and data, including more global statistics disaggregated by sex, to inform gender equality strategies,** we will create an enabling environment for the increased production of, and improved access



to, gender statistics and sex-disaggregated data and will support Member States in filling key data gaps necessary to benchmark global commitments.

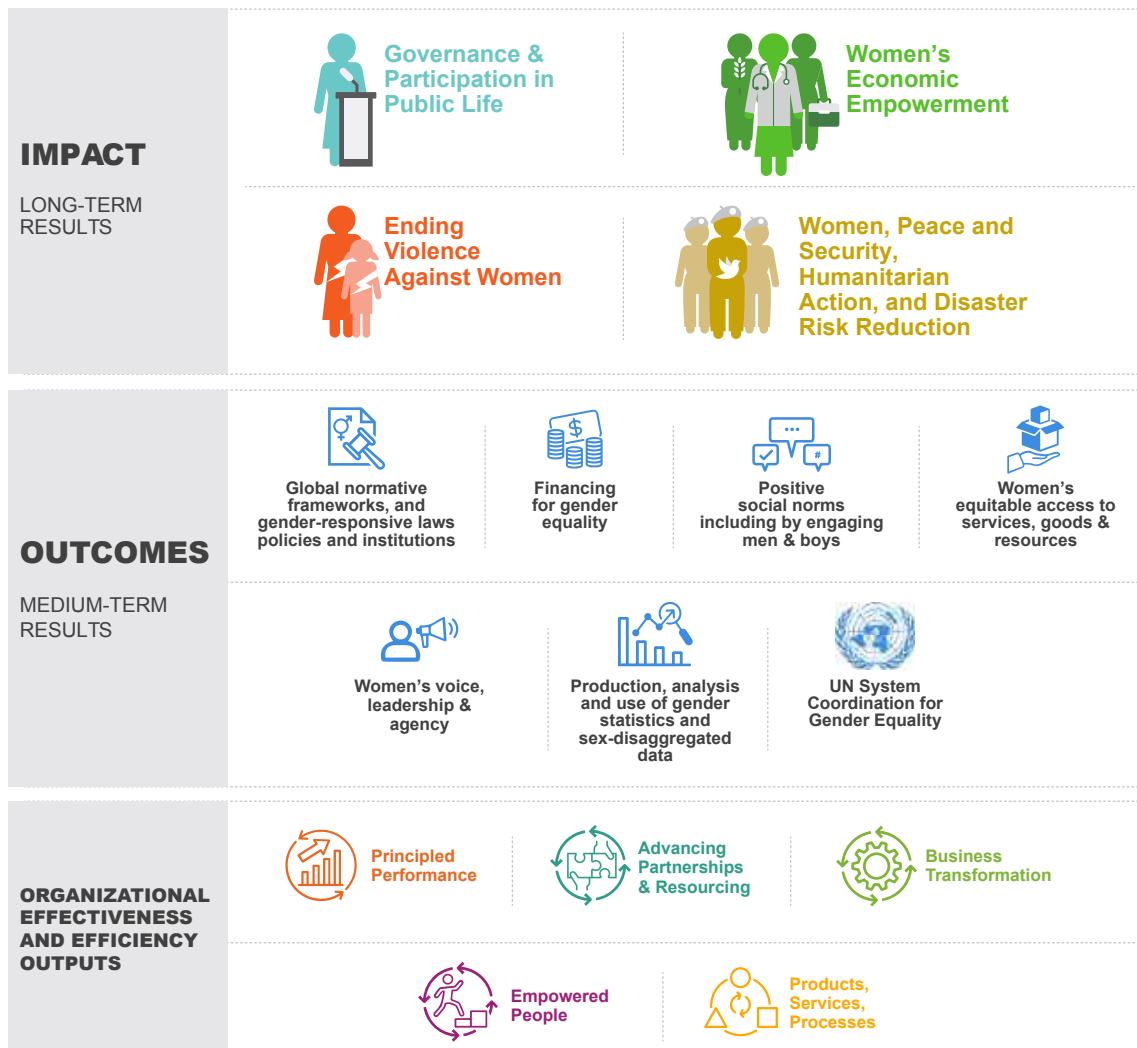
**7. To champion a more coordinated UN system united in the advancement of gender equality,** we will significantly step up our UN coordination work, including supporting gender mainstreaming in all policies and programmes in the UN system and developing frameworks through which to hold the UN accountable to its commitments on gender equality.

Key to achieving these results is expanding our reach and impact through partnership. We will continue to respond to UN Member States' requests for support by directly implementing programmes for gender equality and the empowerment of women at the local, regional and global levels. We will do so by providing thought leadership, policy advice, technical assistance and capacity building to government, civil society and UN partners; by engaging in multi-stakeholder partnerships; through direct grant-making to grassroots leaders; by integrating climate change mitigation into our work; by investing in new technologies; and by listening to and amplifying the voices of young people.



## STRATEGIC PLAN VISION

Achieve gender equality, the empowerment of all women and girls and the fulfilment of their human rights.



# LESSONS LEARNED FROM OUR FIRST DECADE



UN Women/Joe Saade

Ten years since the formation of UN Women, we have learned where we are most effective – and where we need to invest to improve our impact. In our first decade, we have established that:

- **Our triple mandate makes a difference:** By linking civil society, Member States and UN partners, we have played a key role in advancing global norms and standards for gender equality, and in translating these into meaningful change on the ground. We can continue to leverage this unique position going forward.
- **UN Women is regarded as a global thought and practice leader:** Over the past decade, we have been at the forefront of generating research, data and knowledge on gender equality, including the establishment of flagship publications such as Progress of the World's Women. The impact of COVID-19 on women and girls demonstrates a need to continue and to grow this work.
- **We can scale impact by sharpening our focus:** To translate the results of our first decade into sustainable change, we must focus on high-impact approaches aimed at dismantling structural barriers to gender equality – including better integrating the principle of leaving no one behind by intentionally focusing on the most marginalized communities and addressing the root causes of inequity that affect them.
- **Partnerships provide a key comparative advantage:** Our ability to convene and support dialogues between civil society, governments and other stakeholders allows UN Women to amplify our influence in advancing the gender equality agenda. In our next decade, we aim to deepen our relationships with existing partners and to expand new partnerships, with women's movements, men and boys, the private sector, the media, think tanks, international financial institutions, and other actors.
- **We need more flexible and predictable funding:** For our agenda to succeed, we need to support our partners to unlock sustainable financing. This will require creative resource mobilization and innovative financing, including through increased partnerships with the private sector.
- **It's time to mainstream gender equality across the UN:** Recent UN development system reforms have bolstered our ability to advance gender equality and women's empowerment across the UN system. We now have the opportunity to further mainstream gender equality by partnering with key UN agencies – including UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and beyond – in joint planning, programming, monitoring and reporting.



# A HIGH-IMPACT BUSINESS MODEL FOR ACHIEVING GENDER EQUALITY

Looking beyond our current strategic planning period and toward our next decade, we recognize that we must adapt our ways of working to a rapidly changing world. To ensure that we are poised to respond to emerging and urgent situations in ways that are agile and efficient, we commit to a transformation of our own business practices. This includes the following:

- Reviewing our processes and holding ourselves accountable to value-for-money principles
- Expanding our influence, reach and efficiency by working through partnership wherever possible and leveraging financing from other donors and implementors
- Optimizing our field presences through decentralization
- Investing in standardized and more integrated programme approaches to achieve impact at scale
- Leveraging our role as thought leader by offering advisory services
- Strengthening our grantmaking and partner selection to support co-created, transformative change
- Maximizing our resources by treating available funding as catalytic investments to drive growth
- Nurturing a diverse and empowered workforce by striving to create an inclusive culture that attracts and retains talent



**FIND THE FULL  
STRATEGIC PLAN  
DOCUMENTS HERE:**

[UN WOMEN STRATEGIC PLAN  
2022-2025](#)

[INTEGRATED RESULT AND  
RESOURCES FRAMEWORK OF  
UN WOMEN STRATEGIC PLAN  
2022-2025](#)

# UN WOMEN IS THE UN ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO GENDER EQUALITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN. A GLOBAL CHAMPION FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS, UN WOMEN WAS ESTABLISHED TO ACCELERATE PROGRESS ON MEETING THEIR NEEDS WORLDWIDE.

UN Women supports UN Member States as they set global standards for achieving gender equality, and works with governments and civil society to design laws, policies, programmes and services needed to ensure that the standards are effectively implemented and truly benefit women and girls worldwide. It works globally to make the vision of the Sustainable Development Goals a reality for women and girls and stands behind women's equal participation in all aspects of life, focusing on four strategic priorities: Women lead, participate in and benefit equally from governance systems; Women have income security, decent work and economic autonomy; All women and girls live a life free from all forms of violence; Women and girls contribute to and have greater influence in building sustainable peace and resilience, and benefit equally from the prevention of natural disasters and conflicts and humanitarian action. UN Women also coordinates and promotes the UN system's work in advancing gender equality.



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