

**Briefing in preparation for the 2022 high-level political forum:
Integrating a gender perspective in the voluntary national reviews**

Monday, 13 December 2021, 8:30 – 10:00 am

Full recording of the event is available [here](#) (click 'send code' then input from email).

SUMMARY

The briefing was attended by Permanent Representatives, Deputy Permanent Representatives and other delegates from the Permanent Missions in New York, as well as several officials from capitals, out of the 46 countries presenting voluntary national reviews (VNRs) in 2022.

Speakers highlighted the importance of integrating a gender perspective in the forthcoming VNRs and in the implementation of all the Sustainable Development Goals. This includes strengthening the use of gender data and statistics to inform policy-making and assessing the implications of any planned action on women, including in relation to planning, budgeting, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, with the aim to address inequalities and achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls. This is imperative given the disproportionate socio-economic impacts of COVID-19 on women and girls, as well as the in-depth review of Goal 5 at the 2022 high-level political forum on sustainable development.

***The Philippines, Latvia, Kazakhstan and Malawi** highlighted key national initiatives for gender equality, including in relation to energy and environmental management, technology, entrepreneurship, financing and data and statistics. The **Women's Major Group** emphasized the significance of the role of civil society organizations in the VNR process as well as of the voluntary local reviews and regional forums. The **UN Committee for Development Policy** underscored the need for the VNRs to be more substantive and include lessons learned, as well as incorporate analysis on inequalities, including gender inequalities.*

In his welcoming remarks, **H.E. Mr. Jukka Salovaara, Permanent Representative of Finland to the UN**, emphasized the need to bridge the gender digital divide as well as the importance of sex-disaggregated data to base policy interventions. Finland pursues implementation of the 2030 Agenda by leveraging the interlinkages among the Goals and targets. **Ms. Asa Regnér, Assistant Secretary-General/Deputy Executive Director of UN Women**, highlighted evidence on the limited or lack of progress across regions on SDG 5 indicators and emphasized the importance of integrating a gender perspective in the VNRs across all 17 Goals, particularly to assess good practices and challenges in national gender strategies since the last VNR. UN Women continues to support Member States and other stakeholders at the national, regional and global levels, including in the preparations of the VNRs.

Ms. Jessamyn Encarnacion, Statistics Specialist, UN Women, underscored the significance of the production, accessibility and use of disaggregated data and gender statistics in informing evidence-based policymaking. Available evidence from rapid gender assessment surveys on the impacts of COVID-19 shows that women were more likely than men to spend increased time on unpaid domestic and care work

and less likely to receive pandemic-related cash relief from governments. There is a tendency for higher prevalence of food insecurity among women who experience or know someone who experience violence since onset of the pandemic. Gender data has been instrumental across regions in strengthening the integration of a gender perspective in socio-economic policies. UN Women will continue to support countries with statistical capacity building and the promotion of data use.

H.E. Mr. Enrique Manalo, Permanent Representative of the Philippines and Co-chair of the Group of Friends of VNRs to achieve the SDGs, highlighted the launch of the national SDG Watch to monitor SDG indicators, including for Goal 5, as well as the update to its gender equality plan, which is cross-sectoral. A gender toolkit was also developed for the energy sector as well as a gender and development strategic framework, and per the gender mainstreaming evaluation framework the national gender equality mechanism partnered with the ministry of environment to mainstream gender in environmental programmes. The next meeting of the Group of Friends of VNRs will take place in January 2022.

H.E. Mr. Andrejs Pildegovičs, Permanent Representative of Latvia, highlighted that Latvia is conducting a statistical mapping to follow up on the SDG 5 indicators and has made progress since 2018, with strengthened policies in relation to equal rights in labour and education, equal pay and eliminating gender-based violence, as well as gender mainstreaming in sectoral policies. It developed its first national action plan on women and peace and security for 2020-2025 and has doubled its bilateral assistance target for gender equality. Civil society organizations also play an important role and have presented a spotlight review as well as pursued many gender equality initiatives, including in relation to technology.

Ms. Anel Bakytbekkyzy, Deputy Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan, expressed concern for the challenges faced by women due to inequalities, discrimination and violence in education, employment, political participation and other spheres. Frequent monitoring of gender data is necessary, as well as capacity building and the representation of women in management positions. **Mr. Austin Chingwengwe, Monitoring and Evaluation Manager, National Planning Commission of Malawi**, explained that gender equality, youth and environmental management are cross-cutting issues throughout the country's long-term development plan. Initiatives are being implemented in relation to increasing women in public service and executive positions, keeping girls in school, and promoting financial access for entrepreneurship. Malawi is working to improve data disaggregation, baselines and tracking, as well as pursuing gender-responsive budgeting. The national gender equality mechanism is involved in the VNR preparations to ensure gender issues are at the core of the process.

Ms. Wardarina Thaib, Asia Organizing Partner of the Women's Major Group and co-lead of the Major Groups and other Stakeholders Coordination Mechanism VNR Task Force, underscored the need for the VNRs to include the participation of civil society organizations to avoid capital-centric consultation as well as human rights mechanisms to ensure policy coherence between human rights and sustainable development. Voluntary local reviews and regional forums provide opportunities for comprehensive reviews and linking the national, regional and global processes. Regional forums could be restructured to better inform the HLPF and allow the possibility of voluntary regional reviews. **Professor Sakiko Fukuda-Parr, Vice-Chair of the UN Committee on Development Policy**, highlighted the VNR analyses conducted over the last four years, which demonstrate that the VNRs need to be more substantive and include lessons learned. CSO shadow reports also provide important information and need to be recognized.

ANNEX

Select slides from UN Women data presentation (for full presentation, email joann.lee@unwomen.org):



SOME DOCUMENTED USE CASES OF RGAs

Gender data on the impacts of COVID-19 used to inform critical gender-responsive policies and recovery plans to build back better.



Source: UN Women, Women and Girl Left Behind: Claring Gaps in Pandemic Responses (upcoming)

Monitoring the *gendered* impacts of COVID-19: Basic needs

Women were less likely to receive cash relief or support from governments or NGOs



Women without children, single moms, and young women were those most left behind



5 | Rapid Gender Assessments on the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 | 12 December 2021

Resources:

[Progress on the SDGs: The Gender Snapshot 2021](#)

[Rapid Gender Assessments on the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19](#)

[Rapid Gender Assessments on the impacts of COVID-19 on violence against women](#)

[COVID-19 and Gender Policy Tracker](#)

[COVID-19 and the Gender Monitor](#) (database)

[Women Count programme](#)

[UN Committee for Development Policy – VNR analysis](#)

Programme:

8:30 – 8:45 AM	WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H.E. Mr. Jukka Salovaara, Permanent Representative of Finland • Ms. Asa Regner, Assistant Secretary-General/Deputy Executive Director of UN Women, Normative Support, UN System Coordination and Programme Results • <u>Moderator:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ms. Sofie Sandström, First Secretary, Permanent Mission of Finland
8:45 – 8:55 AM	PRESENTATION

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Jessamyn Encarnacion, Statistics Specialist, UN Women
8:55 – 9:25 AM	PANEL DISCUSSION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H.E. Mr. Enrique Manalo, Permanent Representative of the Philippines and Co-chair of the Group of Friends of VNRs to achieve the SDGs • H.E. Mr. Andrejs Pildegovičs, Permanent Representative of Latvia • Ms. Anel Bakytbekkyzy, Deputy Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan • Mr. Austin Chingwengwe, Monitoring and Evaluation Manager, National Planning Commission of Malawi
9:25 – 9:35 AM	INTERVENTIONS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Wardarina Thaib, Asia Organizing Partner of the Women’s Major Group and co-lead of the Major Groups and other Stakeholders Coordination Mechanism VNR Task Force • Professor Sakiko Fukuda-Parr, Vice-Chair of the UN Committee on Development Policy
9:35 – 9:55 AM	QUESTION & ANSWER
9:55 – 10:00 AM	CLOSING