

Global Leaders' Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

New Zealand Update: 20 September 2016

New Zealand is proud to continue its leadership role on gender equality in the international community. New Zealand is an active participant in annual international meetings focused on the advancement of women, and maintains a strong and consistent voice for women's rights and advancement globally. New Zealand's term on the UN Security Council offers an opportunity to contribute to the Council's efforts to address the gendered impacts of conflict and the role of women in conflict prevention, protection and sustainable peace. New Zealand continues in its commitment to gender equality and improving outcomes for women through its involvement in 'Step it Up for gender equality'.

The principle of equality for all is enshrined in New Zealand law and supported by an independent judiciary, democratic structures of governance, human rights accountability mechanisms, and the recognition and protection of society's most vulnerable groups and individuals.

Women continue to play a pivotal role in the political, social and economic life of New Zealand. Despite the challenges of recovering from the global financial crisis and the devastating physical, financial and emotional impact of the Canterbury earthquakes, New Zealand has implemented positive legislative and policy reforms to improve women's lives. The Government is committed to ensuring all women have the opportunity to realise their strengths and achieve social and economic success.

The Government's priorities for women reflect the areas where more work is needed: supporting more women and girls in education and training; utilising women's skills and growing the economy; encouraging and developing women leaders; and ensuring women and girls are free from violence. Maximising women's contributions is essential for women, their families and communities, and as an investment in New Zealand's future prosperity and wellbeing.

New Zealand's population is increasingly diverse and some groups of women, particularly Māori, Pacific, migrant and refugee women, and women with disabilities, continue to have poorer outcomes relative to other groups. The Government has committed to working alongside key stakeholders and communities to develop solutions that are relevant for different groups of women. Greater cross-agency accountability and funding approaches have fostered innovative and sustainable solutions and the Government continues to support a vibrant community sector.