

Shaping the international agenda: raising women's voices in international forums



UNOG
THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE
AT GENEVA



The Publication

- Joint effort by Member States and UN System entities
 - to highlight the urgency of addressing women's participation and leadership in government delegations to intergovernmental fora;
 - result of discussions within the UN Governing Bodies Secretariat under the leadership of UNOG, UN-Women, ITU
- Informed by inputs from 23 UN agencies
- Complements the agenda of the Secretary-General to prioritize gender parity among staff within the UN System

What's in the publication?

- ✓ Existing intergovernmental mandates and inter-agency frameworks
- ✓ Women's participation in national Governments and intergovernmental forums
- ✓ Best practices in promoting women's participation at different levels – national and multilateral settings
- ✓ Key recommendations to increase the participation of women in meetings of the United Nations and other international organizations' governing bodies.

Intergovernmental Mandates

- Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action
 - calls on governmental bodies to commit to establishing the goal of gender balance
- General Assembly resolution 58/142
 - urged States to promote gender balance for their delegations to United Nations and other international meetings and conferences
- 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
 - Target 5.5: ensuring women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making;
 - Target 10.2: promoting the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of sex;
 - Target 16.7: ensuring responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.

The state of play: Women remain underrepresented



Le Secrétaire général de l'ONU, Ban Ki-moon, dont le second mandat arrive à son terme à la fin de cette année, pose avec les représentants des membres du Conseil de sécurité. Photo ONU/Evan Schneider

- At the 70th year of the UN's founding, only 3 women have served as PGAs
- Women as heads of delegation represented only 20%
- Women PRs account for 20% (NY); 27% (Geneva)
- Women's participation in IG meetings remained around 30 percent

Examples of measures

A. Explicit policies and mandated targets



✓ 2 have set a mandatory minimum target of 30% for women's participation in governing bodies



- measures or guidance to advance gender balance, particularly specific **targets and quotas**
- gathering or dissemination of **sex-disaggregated data** on participants
- setting enforcement measures like **sanctions** on voting rights (IPU)

Examples of measures

B. Tracking and reporting

Tracking	Entities
Composition, by sex, of bodies created to support the work of the intergovernmental body	2
Percentage of women as Chairs	3
Women's interventions in general	2
Women's interventions on specific agenda items	2
Percentage of women at ministerial or Head of State level participating in the governing bodies	1
Number of women as heads or deputy heads of delegation	3
Percentage of women panellists in side events	4
Women as facilitators / co-facilitators (for example in negotiating groups, if applicable)	2
Other	4

✓ The DG of ILO invites States to periodically report on measures and obstacles to achieve gender parity, and contacts those that did not meet the 30% target



- **Collection, analysis and public dissemination of sex-disaggregated data are vital. This must be done regularly and be the basis of reporting**

Examples of measures

C. Training and capacity-building

- Deliver training and awareness-raising activities
- Create **leadership programmes**
- Develop a **list of women experts** and moderators for future events

D. Financial support

- **Lack of funding** for capacity-building, training and travel can often hold women back from participating in decision-making processes.
- Funding is often **ad hoc and extrabudgetary**. These measures are often not financed by core or regular organization budgets.

- ✓ ITU and UNITAR have offered support to build capacity for women candidates and organized workshops on leadership and negotiation skills for women delegates.



- ✓ Within the UNFCCC, the Women Delegates' Fund is a successful initiative, albeit dependent on external funding;
- ✓ UNCTAD proactively seeks out qualified women to take part in expert meetings;



United Nations
Framework
Convention on
Climate Change



UNITED NATIONS
UNCTAD

Examples of measures

E. Advocacy and networking

- **Informal groups** meeting regularly to strategize: Group of Friends for Gender Parity, Forum of Women Parliamentarians, etc.
- One **day** of the conference especially dedicated to gender equality and women's empowerment

- ✓ The IGC: a cross-sectoral leadership network to break down gender barriers and strive for gender parity in panels and delegations in Geneva, New-York and other multilateral hubs



F. Communication strategies

- Ensure that all parties have the information needed to develop, implement and monitor policies and plans to enhance women's participation.
- Encouraging States in correspondence to include women in their delegations, especially at high positions
- Reminding that participation is being tracked
- Recognizing delegations with the highest number of women

- ✓ 3 entities send invitations encouraging the nomination of women in delegations and making reference to specific resolutions encouraging women's participation



where
do we go
from
here?



NO GO! All male panel in a Global Summit on Women?!!!

50♂ / 50♀



Key recommendations for Member States

1. Institute a quota to ensure that over-all attendance to governing bodies comprise at least 30 per cent women, aiming for increase to 50 per cent
2. Apply quotas to their own delegations to ensure that at least 30 per cent of their delegates are women, with a gradual increase to 50 per cent
3. Establish a “comply or explain” rule to ensure compliance with quotas and other targets
4. Expand leadership opportunities (Chairs, facilitators...) through rotating leadership or women and men co-chairing
5. Organize training and capacity-building activities for women staff and officials
6. Raise awareness and train both women and men on gender equality
7. Allocate funding to ensure women delegates’ participation in meetings
8. Communicate resolutions and decisions on gender equality and gender balance in invitations to conferences, notifications for nominations, elections and appointments
9. Create opportunities for discussion, networking and collaboration among women delegates and with representatives from women’s organizations

Key recommendations for Senior Government and UN Officials

1. Develop a gender-equality policy, strategy or action plan for the organization or office
2. Support efforts to ensure gender balance in their delegations to the United Nations
3. Engage in communications campaigns and strategies to improve women's participation in decision-making bodies
4. Identify and invest in the career advancement and leadership of women officials
5. Strive for gender parity in all panels and discussions
6. Disseminate information on intergovernmental commitments, initiatives and best practices on promoting gender equality
7. Make a public commitment
 - Join the International Gender Champions, Group of Friends for Gender Parity;
 - Support campaigns including UN Women's HeforShe

Key recommendations for UN Governing Board Secretariats

1. Collect, analyse and disseminate **data disaggregated by sex**
 - delegates attending conferences and meetings, those serving as Chairs, Co-Chairs and facilitators)
2. Create and maintain a centralized **roster of female experts**, speakers and panelists
3. Collaborate with organizations such as UNITAR and UN-Women to develop **capacity-building and training programmes**
4. Provide **information**, regularly and systematically, to Member States on available measures to promote gender balance
5. Acknowledge and **publicize efforts** to ensure gender-balanced delegations

UN Women's Commitment

- Regularly collect and publicly disseminate **data disaggregated by sex**
 - Executive Board attendance and information on composition of the Bureau, other leadership roles
- Collaborate with UNITAR to develop **capacity-building and training programmes** on gender equality and women's leadership
- Provide **information**, regularly and systematically, to Member States on available measures to promote gender balance
- Acknowledge and **publicize efforts** to ensure gender-balanced delegations, including through a publication

Thank You