



## Network

### The UN Women's Newsletter

### Volume No. 21, Issue 2 – May-June-July-August 2020

#### Letter from the Director, UN System Coordination Division, UN Women

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

It is our pleasure to bring to you the 2<sup>nd</sup> issue of the Network newsletter for 2020. This year continues as a unique milestone for the UN community as it converges commemoration of many landmark events for GEEW - the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Beijing+25) and the 5-year milestone for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda), the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the Security Council resolution 1325, the 75th anniversary of the UN and the 10th anniversary of the creation of UN Women.



We begin our coverage of the second quarter for 2020 with our interview series. We sat down with Ms. Cai Cai, Chief, Gender Equality and Inclusion at ESCAP, and passionate advocate for gender equality to take stock of progress since the signing of the BPA, 25 years ago.

In addition, this issue draws your attention to the Report of the Secretary General on integrating a gender dimension in all policies of the UN System.

Other news includes results of a study that finds that women led countries seem to evidence a better handling of the coronavirus, International Youth Day celebrations, the future of women at work in the age of automation as well as a new Catalyst research which reveals that a Climate of Silence Hinders Men's Willingness to Interrupt Sexist Behaviour.

Recommended readings include UN Women's Annual Report 2019-2020 and the Global Gender Gap Report 2020 which highlight that at the current pace of progress, it will take nearly a century to achieve parity at work.

There is much to know, and even more to do.

In solidarity,

Aparna Mehrotra  
Director, UN system Coordination Division  
UN Women

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## *Interview with*

Ms. Cai Cai, Chief, Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Section, Social Development Division,  
UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia-Pacific (ESCAP)

Meet Cai Cai – from People’s Republic of China-she heads the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion programme of the Social Development Division, ESCAP.

A fighter for women’s rights for over two decades Ms. Cai Cai has vigorously led the ESCAP to advance gender equality and empowerment of women in the Asia -Pacific. A public policy specialist Ms. Cai has extensive experience at ESCAP as well as UNICEF and UNDP in policy development, advocacy and capacity building to empower women and girls as a key strategy for pro-poor growth and sustainable development. She received her Bachelor of Arts in International Journalism from the Shanghai International Studies University and a Master’s Degree from Harvard Kennedy School of Government.





In the following interview, Ms. Cai takes stock of progress on GEEW, discusses why 2020 is a critical year for the gender equality agenda and what it will take to achieve *Generation Equality* and “Planet 50-50” by 2030. She spoke with the UN Women as the UN celebrates 75 years of its founding and 25 years of the Beijing Platform for Action in September 2020.

With the convergence of the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Beijing+25) and the 5-year milestone for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda), the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the Security Council resolution 1325, the 75th anniversary of the UN and the 10th anniversary of the creation of UN Women, the year 2020 marks a window of opportunity to take stock of progress made and actions required to address barriers to gender equality and implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030.

*Q.1. Could you tell us a bit about yourself as a woman leader and a strong voice for eliminating discrimination against women and promoting their inclusion and empowerment. How did you come to dedicate yourself to these issues and to these challenging jobs?*

I was brought up in a family that encouraged all the children to excel to their best abilities, with mother as a school principle and my father as an engineer. After completing my graduate study in public policy, I started to work with a UNDP HIV prevention and development project in South-East Asia. Though the community work, I realized that a lot of women got infected were due to their socioeconomic status, either driven by poverty and entering into sex industry or being forced to sell sex as victims of trafficking. It made me ponder about the inequalities between women and men in our societies. Then I worked with a UNICEF team on a project to impart life skills to adolescents so that they could make informed and responsible decisions about their own lives. Again, I had the first-hand experience of interviewing more than one thousand adolescents to go deep into their attitudes and behaviour. It startled me how adolescent girls perceived themselves as inferior beings, with low self-esteem and the feeling of not in charge of their own destiny. This motivated me to examine further about the impact of social conditioning on women and girls.

When I began to work with ESCAP in 2013, I had more opportunities travel to various countries and observe the gender gaps on a much broader scale involving almost all sectors. It became a natural choice for me to take on the portfolio of gender equality and women’s empowerment so that I could focus on the issues.

*Q.2. It is now 17 years since you joined the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific. Can you describe your role as head of the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Section? What has been the hallmark of your tenure? What has been the ESCAP’s main strategy to advance GEEW?*



As Head of the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Section, I am leading ESCAP's regional programmes on advancing gender equality and women's empowerment as well as disability-inclusive development in Asia-Pacific. As a regional commission, a key function of ESCAP is its regional convening role in fostering regional consensus on key gender issues and developing policy options through its intergovernmental platform. A major milestone in my tenure was the adoption of the Asia-Pacific Declaration on Advancing Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Beijing+25 Review" – the outcome document of the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on the Beijing+25 Review in November 2019. The Declaration outlined key actions in a wide range of areas, ranging from women's economic empowerment, political participation, to environment conservation, climate action and peace building process, toward realizing women's equal enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms for an equal future by 2030. More than 600 participants from 54 countries, comprising representatives from Governments, international organizations and civil society organizations attended this ministerial conference organized by ESCAP in collaboration with UN Women.

In supporting ESCAP member States and harnessing its comparative strength of multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary expertise, ESCAP focuses on addressing intertwined, multifaceted barriers to women's economic empowerment through its technical cooperation work. I am proud to have led the development of a five-year regional initiative "Catalyzing Women's Entrepreneurship: Creating a Gender-Responsive Entrepreneurial Ecosystem", with financial support of the Government of Canada. The initiative aims to create an enabling policy and business environment that enhances women entrepreneurs' access to capital through innovative financing mechanisms as well as increase their use of ICT and digital solutions,

*Q.3. How has the UN-SWAP, a system-wide innovation launched in 2012 by UN Women, which constitutes the first unified and harmonized accountability framework for mainstreaming gender institutionally across all UN entities helped to embed gender considerations in the work of ESCAP?*

The UN-SWAP provided a comprehensive accountability framework with clear indicators on leadership, strategic planning and programmes, HR and financial allocation, capacity development and communication. It generated a strong momentum for ESCAP's gender mainstreaming efforts in both operations and programmes. Last year, our Executive Secretary launched gender marker, to help track the financial resources that the organization dedicated to support gender equality and women's empowerment. Overall, the UN-SWAP enabled ESCAP to address gender equality in a holistic manner and develop forward-looking strategies towards gender equality, poverty reduction and economic growth in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

*Q.4. We are living in the year 2020, yet 25 years after Beijing Declaration, the journey to reach generation equality is far from over and achieving these goals it is said remains "humanity's biggest project". Despite some gains, girls and women are still far away from the goal of equality, anywhere in the world, with Covid -19 further putting at risk of regression the hard earned gains. We are still a century away from reaching gender parity; for women's economic participation, we are 257 years from closing the gender gap — up*

*from the 202 years reported in 2019. Based on current trajectories, existing efforts will not suffice to achieve a Planet 50-50 by 2030. Given that, what still encourages you?*

We must take a historical view of the change process. Deep rooted gender inequality has existed for thousands of years due to the social and economic structures of our societies. We have seen steady and substantial progress in advancing women's rights in the past century: gaining rights to vote, greater freedom and decision-making over choices in our lives, and opportunities for education, gainful employment and leadership in business and public life. Through their trailblazing endeavours, women leaders and champions had shown us that transformative changes are possible. While there is still a long journey ahead toward gender equality in many fronts, I am always hopeful that we would go forward.

*Q.5. It is been evidenced that gender inequality is at the cost of substantial and unrealized social and market benefits. In fact, the McKinsey Global Institute estimates that narrowing the global gender gap could add US \$12 trillion in annual gross domestic product. What can be done in the coming decade to overcome the challenges to narrowing this gap?*

The Asia-Pacific countries have identified women's economic empowerment as one of the top priorities in the Beijing+25 review. Currently, just about half of women of 25 years old and above participate in the labour market, compared with 84% of men of the same age group. This large gender gap is due to complex and multifaceted socioeconomic factors.

It's of critical importance to reduce women's unpaid care work, which has serious implications on their economic and political participation as well as gender gaps in earnings. In Asia-Pacific, women work the longest hours (paid and unpaid work combined) in the world. On average, women did four times the amount of unpaid care work than men in the region. Governments must invest in universal and gender-responsive social protection as well as the care economy with strong social care infrastructure that takes care of children and the elderly.

In the meantime, it is vital to reduce the digital divide, boost women's capacity to use ICTs, and enhance their access to financial services, including digital financing platforms. Digital and financial inclusion, along with other measures to build a gender-responsive ecosystem, can go a long way to unleash women's potential and enable women entrepreneurs to flourish.

*Q.6. With the forthcoming high-level UN meeting at the 75th session of the General Assembly in September, how would this impact the gender equality agenda to accelerate the realization of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls by 2030?*

With the convergence of the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 5-year milestone for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2020, the high-level meeting of the GA session provides a great opportunity to shine a spotlight on gender concerns among leaders of nations. This is indeed an opportune moment to garner stronger political will and generate greater momentum in achieving gender equality. We must ride on this high tide, to help leaders see that the gender equality

agenda has a bearing on all SDGs, and therefore, closing gender gaps in all sectors is essential to achieving the 2030 Agenda.

*Q.7. Why in your opinion is feminist leadership essential to achieve gender equality?*

In my view, feminist leadership is transformative leadership that aims to promote social, economic and political changes toward equality for all. Therefore, feminist leadership, with its focus on major structural changes in our societies, in both private and public realms, which are critical to address the root causes that generate and reproduce unequal power dynamics. Only through such holistic and system transformation could we achieve gender equality in a big way.

*Q.8. Is there a key learning on the topic of the advancement of gender equality that you could pass on to young women and men?*

I have always held a belief that everyone has unique qualities and skills, and we should all strive to grow and bring out the best in ourselves. This has enabled me to continuously improve myself and take on opportunities as well as responsibilities to contribute, and to lead. Leadership is within all of us. Young women and men can demonstrate leadership in whatever field and task you do, and advocate change to advance gender equality, and equality for all.

## **Congratulations to**

Ms. Sanda Ojiambo of Kenya – on her appointment as United Nations Global Compact Executive Director. As the second woman to be appointed in the role, she will succeed Lise Kingo of Denmark.

Ms. Ojiambo, who assumed the role on 17 June, brings 20 years of experience to lead the Global Compact in its next phase to mobilize a global movement of sustainable companies and stakeholders and bring the full weight of the private sector to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

She has served as Head of Sustainable Business and Social Impact, Safaricom Plc, Kenya since 2010 and was the Senior Manager of Safaricom and MPESA Foundations, Kenya from 2008 to 2010.

## **Gender at the United Nations**

### **UN Women turns 10, placing women's rights, priorities and voices centre-stage**



On 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2020 UN Women turned 10 years old. In 2010 the General Assembly adopted a landmark resolution to merge four parts of the United Nations system into the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women – to be known as UN Women.

A decade on, as UN Women celebrates this landmark anniversary in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, the human rights of women and girls have more prominence, universality and more urgency than ever before. The founding allies - Member States, civil society and the women's movements – are now joined by partnerships and relationships throughout society, across age groups, across the world.

Since 2010, UN Women's staff, present in some 90 countries, has delivered programmes that have almost quadrupled in size, and that have brought change to billions of those most in need. UN Women's work to support reform in discriminatory laws in 2019 alone has affected the lives of more than 1 billion women.

This journey was not taken alone, so thanks is due to all those who support UN Women with resources of all kinds, who work with us, walk with us, talk and tweet with us. At the tipping point of this decade, and as we at UN Women look ahead to Generation Equality and a future of multiple challenges, we are confident that we do not do this alone. We know that to change the world will take the world.

See more at: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2020/6/statement-ed-phumzile-un-women-turns-10>

## **UN Women Executive Board convenes first virtual Annual Session**

The UN Women Executive Board convened for this year's Annual Session on Monday 22 June to Tuesday 23 June 2020, remotely via the Zoom platform. The President of the Executive Board, Jukka Salovaara, Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations, opened the Session and UN Women Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka delivered her annual report.

In addition to a briefing on the progress made with respect to the Strategic Plan 2018–2021, including its midterm review, the Executive Board was presented with updates on the implementation of UN General Assembly resolution 72/279 on the repositioning of the UN development system; and UN Women's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The detailed agenda of this Session and all official documents may be accessed on the Executive Board webpage or the PaperSmart-portal of the United Nations.

See at: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2020/6/announcer-executive-board-convenes-virtual-annual-session>

<https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2020/6/speech-ed-phumzile-opening-annual-session-of-the-executive-board>

## Secretary-General meets with Young Women from Civil Society Organizations

Secretary-General António Guterres on the sidelines of the 64<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on the Status of Women met with women's civil society organizations at a virtual town hall in June 2020.

The Secretary General highlighted that COVID-19 is deepening existing inequalities, including gender inequality. Already a reversal is seen in the decades of limited and fragile progress on gender equality and women's rights. And without a concerned response, the world is at risk of losing a generation or more of gains.

The pandemic he said only demonstrates what is known: that millennia of patriarchy have resulted in a male-dominated world with a male-dominated culture which damages everyone – women, men, girls and boys. The essential question of power is at the back of this mindset. Thus moving forward this question of power is where all efforts should be concentrated.

It is clear that we cannot go back to the failed policies that have resulted in the fragility we see around us – in healthcare systems, in social protection, in access to justice. This is the time to rebuild more equal, inclusive, and resilient societies, he said.

See at: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2020/8/speech-secretary-general-at-town-hall-with-civil-society-organizations>

## Report of the Secretary General on Gender Mainstreaming

The present report, submitted pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 2019/2, assesses progress in the implementation of accountability frameworks for gender mainstreaming of the United Nations system at the global and country levels and in the operational activities of the United Nations development system.

The report responds to this request and coincides with a year of significant anniversaries: 75 years of the United Nations; 25 years since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action; and 20 years since the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325. It draws on United Nations entities' reports under the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and the United Nations country team System-wide Action Plan gender equality scorecard, the United Nations Sustainable Development Group information management system and on secondary sources.



As of 1 January 2020, gender parity – 90 women and 90 men – was achieved in the ranks of full-time senior leadership in the United Nations Secretariat, two years ahead of the target date set in 2017.

See at: <https://undocs.org/en/E/2020/50>

## Around the World

### Female-led countries handled coronavirus better, study suggests

*Analysis points to earlier lockdowns and lower death rates under likes of Jacinda Ardern and Angela Merkel*

The analysis of 194 countries, published by the Centre for Economic Policy Research and the World Economic Forum, suggests the difference is real and “may be explained by the proactive and coordinated policy responses” adopted by female leaders.

Countries led by women had “systematically and significantly better” Covid-19 outcomes, research appears to show, locking down earlier and suffering half as many deaths on average as those led by men.

The relative early success of leaders such as Germany’s Angela Merkel, New Zealand’s Jacinda Ardern, Denmark’s Mette Frederiksen, Taiwan’s Tsai Ing-wen and Finland’s Sanna Marin has so far attracted many headlines but little academic attention.

See at: [https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=3617953](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3617953)

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/aug/18/female-led-countries-handled-coronavirus-better-study-jacinda-ardern-angela-merkel>

### International Youth Day

*Nothing less than equality and a seat at the table for youth*

*At a global virtual event co-hosted by UN Women and ITU, youth activists imagine a “new normal” where diverse youth have a seat at the table to shape policy and decisions.*

UN Women, in collaboration with ITU and youth and gender equality activists around the world, celebrated International Youth Day on 12 August with a virtual event. Co-hosted by international activist and Miss Universe, Zozibini Tunzi, the event featured performances by international artists and vibrant conversations about social justice, peace and security and the impact of COVID-19 on youth.

Young leaders from Japan, Kenya, South Africa, and the United States of America shared their visions for Youth Day.

Following a musical performance by Maia Reficco (Argentinian-American singer) and a message from the Beijing +25 Youth Task Force, UN Women Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka reminded youth leaders and audiences that while UN Women was still “a young girl, [of] ten years old, [it is] made up of people with many years of fighting for gender equality.” In her remarks, the Executive Director stressed the need for intergenerational collaboration. “We are encouraged by your radical impatience; it is most refreshing. We need you to be at the table where decisions are being made...in the streets...on the podiums,” she said.

See at: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2020/8/news-equality-and-a-seat-at-the-table-for-youth>

## UN Women launches new UK chapter of advertising alliance to fight gender-based stereotypes in the industry



Convened by UN Women, a new advertising coalition to tackle harmful stereotypes in UK advertising and media content was launched on July 31<sup>st</sup>. The Unstereotype Alliance, a thought and action platform, has a core group of 28 leading UK advertisers and creative agencies, with the objective of securing commitments from over 100 brands. The initiative will focus on encouraging diverse, inclusive and non-stereotypical representations of marginalised groups, initially focusing on the experiences of women of colour.

Ingrained inequalities in the UK have been further amplified by the COVID-19 global pandemic, and movements such as Black Lives Matter have put a spotlight on the ongoing social and economic injustices. The coalition will champion the advertising industry to act as a force for good, depicting progressive portrayals of women and men and ensuring that diversity is a priority throughout the entire creative process.

See at: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2020/8/press-release-uk-chapter-of-advertising-alliance-to-fight-gender-based-stereotypes>

## Women and Work

### ***The Future of women at work-challenges and opportunities in the age of automation***

While the age of automation, offers new job opportunities and avenues for economic advancement, women will continue to face new challenges overlaid on long-established ones says a new McKinsey Global Institute (MGI) report, *The future of women at work: Transitions in the age of automation*. The report released in June 2020 finds that if women make these transitions, they could be on the path to more productive, better-paid work. If they cannot, they could face a growing wage gap or be left further behind when progress toward gender parity in work is already slow.



Between 40 million and 160 million women globally may need to transition between occupations by 2030, often into higher-skilled roles. To weather this disruption, women (and men) need to be skilled, mobile, and tech-savvy, but women face pervasive barriers on each, and will need targeted support to move forward in the world of work.

This new research explores potential patterns in “jobs lost” (jobs displaced by automation), “jobs gained” (job creation driven by economic growth, investment, demographic changes, and technological innovation), and “jobs changed” (jobs whose activities and skill requirements change from partial automation) for women by exploring several scenarios of how automation adoption and job creation trends could play out by 2030 for men and women given current gender patterns in the global workforce.

The research examines six mature economies (Canada, France, Germany, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States) and four emerging economies (China, India, Mexico, and South Africa), which together account for around half of the world’s population and about 60 percent of global GDP.

See more at: <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/gender-equality/the-future-of-women-at-work-transitions-in-the-age-of-automation>

## **New Catalyst research reveals that a climate of silence hinders men’s willingness to interrupt sexist behaviour**

For many people from all walks of life, experiences of sexism in the workplace are far too common. While everyone has an important role to play in combatting sexism, men are uniquely situated to press for change because they hold the majority of positions of power.

This new research reveals that a climate of silence in the workplace can play a significant role in men’s willingness and ability to interrupt sexist behavior. When speaking up is not encouraged by those who hold power in organizations, employees are more likely to remain quiet when witnessing sexism against women.

What prevents men from interrupting sexist behavior in the workplace? A new Catalyst report examined that question and found that an organizational climate of silence can influence men’s responses as employees believe it is costly or pointless to speak up about inappropriate or discriminatory behaviors. Negin Sattari, a co-author of the report and senior associate of research at Catalyst, explains the research findings and what actions leaders should take, especially during the pandemic.

inform important action steps that companies and leaders can take to break this climate of silence and create more fair and inclusive workplace cultures.

This report is a call to action for organizational leaders to diagnose and address symptoms of a climate of silence and equip men with skills to effectively address day-to-day incidents of sexism in the workplace

See at: <https://www.catalyst.org/research/interrupting-sexism-silence/>  
<https://www.catalyst.org/2020/06/10/interrupting-sexism-men-covid/>



## **Women's Power Index-Council on Foreign Relations** **Today, women around the world are running for political office** **unprecedented numbers—and winning.**

Find out where women around the world wield political power—and why. It was created by CFR's Women and Foreign Policy program, the Women's Power Index ranks 193 UN member states on their progress toward gender parity in political participation. It analyzes the proportion of women who serve as heads of state or government, in cabinets, in national legislatures, as candidates for national legislatures, and in local government bodies, and visualizes the gender gap in political representation.

In the aggregate, women's leadership promotes bipartisanship, equality, and stability. And when women make up a critical mass of legislatures—around 25 to 30 percent—they are more likely to challenge established conventions and policy agendas.

Access at: <https://www.cfr.org/article/womens-power-index>

## **The World Economic Forum's Closing the Gender Gap Accelerator initiative**

While great strides have been made to increase gender equality in some parts of the world, at the current pace of change it could take 257 years to fully close the economic gender gap. But the World Economic Forum's Closing the Gender Gap Accelerator initiative is speeding up the process in the countries it's working with.

Accelerators target four key challenges: women's labour force participation, women in leadership, equal pay, and providing women with the skills to succeed in the jobs of the future.

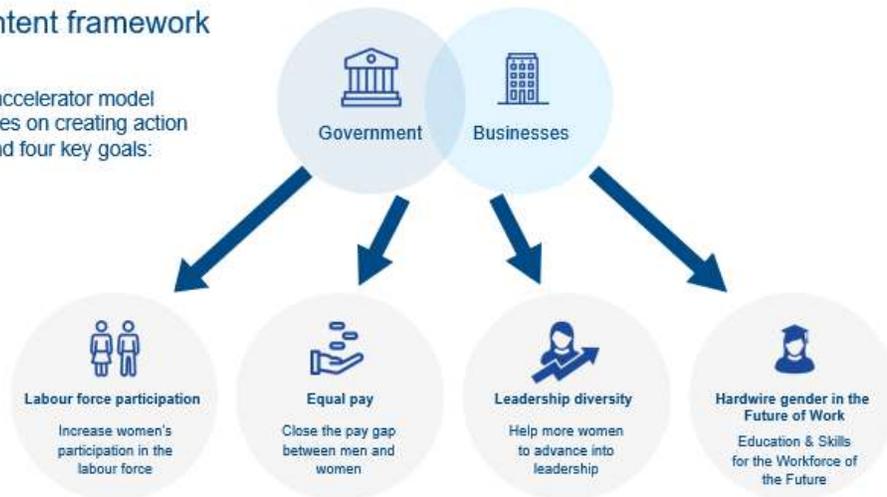
An accelerator promotes in-country public and private partnerships dedicated to advancing women's economic empowerment and addressing obstacles to change. Accelerators are currently set up in Argentina, Colombia, Chile, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Panama and Peru in collaboration with the Inter-American Development Bank, and in France and to Egypt. The World Economic Forum is targeting to have 15 Accelerators by the end of 2020.

### **What challenges hold women back and how does a gender parity accelerator help?**

The accelerator model targets four key barriers to gender parity: increasing female participation in the workforce; boosting participation in management and leadership roles; working towards wage equality; and encouraging education and training to develop the skills women will need to participate in an increasingly technical future workplace.

## Content framework

The accelerator model focuses on creating action around four key goals:



By facilitating private and public sector partnerships, accelerator countries create an action plan to tackle the root causes of economic gender gaps. For the model to work, leaders need to be fully committed to addressing the gender gap. It's this commitment that drives the policy change needed to transform behaviour, both in the economy more broadly as well as inside the workplace.

See at: <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/12/closing-gender-gap-accelerator/#:~:text=The%20World%20Economic%20Forum's%20Closing%20the%20Gender%20Gap%20Accelerator%20initiative,the%20jobs%20of%20the%20future>

## COVID-19 and gender equality: Countering the regressive effects

### A McKinsey Report

*What is good for gender equality is good for the economy and society as well. Covid-19 puts that truth into stark relief and raises critically important choices*

The report says that the COVID-19 continues to affect lives and livelihoods around the world, and the pandemic and its economic fallout are having a regressive effect on gender equality is very visible. It is estimated that women's jobs are 1.8 times more vulnerable to this crisis than men's jobs. Women make up 39 percent of global employment but account for 54 percent of overall job losses. One reason for this greater effect on women is that the virus is significantly increasing the burden of unpaid care, which is disproportionately carried by women. This, among other factors, means that women's employment is dropping faster than average, even accounting for the fact that women and men work in different sectors.

In a gender-regressive scenario in which no action is taken to counter these effects, it is estimated that global GDP growth could be \$1 trillion lower in 2030 than it would be if women's unemployment simply tracked that of men in each sector. Conversely, taking action now to advance gender equality could be valuable, adding \$13 trillion to global GDP in 2030 compared with the gender-regressive scenario. A middle path—taking action only after the crisis has subsided rather than now—would reduce the potential opportunity by more than \$5 trillion. The cost of that delay amounts to three-fourths of the total global GDP we could potentially lose to COVID-19 this year.

See at: <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/future-of-work/covid-19-and-gender-equality-countering-the-regressive-effects>

## WEFs Covid Action Platform

### COVID-19 is the biggest setback to gender equality in a decade

- *Women around the world are losing paid work and doing more unpaid work as a result of the pandemic.*
- *Female entrepreneurs now need support, because much rebuilding will fall on them.*
- *Full economy parity was 257 years away, even before the crisis.*

Secretary General CARE International speaking at the WEF says this pandemic is having a deep impact on women and is throwing away decades of hard-won battles both in terms of gender equality and women's economic rights. COVID-19 has seen the burden of unpaid work on women significantly increase around the globe. There has also been a sharp rise in gender-based violence as a result of the worldwide lockdown. Women are also more likely to be in informal and low-paid jobs, and millions have lost their livelihoods overnight. In Latin America alone, there are around 19 million domestic workers, 80% without contracts, who have been laid off with very little legal and social protection.

Women represent the biggest opportunity for economic growth. In a full potential scenario in which women play an identical role in labour markets to men, as much as \$28 trillion could be added to global annual GDP in 2025.

See at: <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/07/gender-equality-women-employment-covid19/>

## COVID-19 is worsening the gender gap, according to the IMF

The COVID-19 pandemic threatens to roll back gains in women's economic opportunities, widening gender gaps that persist despite 30 years of progress says the IMF in a recent WEF blog..

- The COVID-19 pandemic has threatened progress in closing the gender gap.
- The pandemic has so far proved to have a disproportionate effect on women, as they're more likely to work in the social and informal sectors.
- The IMF stresses the importance of implementing robust policy strategies that can help mediate the effects and limit damaging progress in gender equality.

Well-designed policies to foster recovery can mitigate the negative effects of the crisis on women and prevent further setbacks for gender equality. What is good for women is ultimately good for addressing income inequality, economic growth, and resilience. It is crucial that policymakers adopt measures to limit the scarring effects of the pandemic on women.

See at: <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/07/covid-19-gender-gap-economic-change-gender-parity-equality-coronavirus/>

## World Could Achieve 'Gender Dividend' of \$172 Trillion from Closing Lifetime Earnings Gaps

A new report from the World Bank Group released recently shows that the world could achieve a 'gender dividend' of \$172 trillion by closing gaps in lifetime labor earnings between women and men.

The study, "*How Large is the Gender Dividend? Measuring Selected Impacts and Costs of Gender Inequality*," finds that if women earned the same as men, global human capital wealth could increase by about one-fifth, and women's human capital wealth could increase by more than half.

*This report builds on past research to highlight the cost of the gender earnings gap, which holds countries back from achieving their full potential.*

*Improving women's lifetime earnings opportunities can be achieved by taking actions that redistribute and balance care responsibilities, create a pipeline of talent by closing the gender gap in employment and entrepreneurship, and tackling discriminatory laws and restrictive social norms that hold back girls and women.*

See at: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2020/03/03/world-could-achieve-gender-dividend-of-172-trillion-from-closing-lifetime-earnings-gaps>

## **A century after women’s suffrage, the fight for equality isn’t over Women struggled for decades to win the right to vote, but it’s taken even longer for all to be able to exercise it.**

On August 18, 2020, the United States commemorated the 100th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment. Women and men of all races, ethnicities, and identities fought for—and against—women’s right to vote. The national movement that led to the women’s right to vote is not only a story about women’s rights, but is also an American story of race, class, citizenship, gender, immigration, political identity, and values.

While we’ve made strides, there is still a long ways to go towards equal representation. When compared to 193 other nations, the United States currently ranks 75th in gender equity in our political representation. However, women are increasingly adding their names to ballots

It seems that each generation of women finds ways to exercise its collective voice. Much like the suffragists who gathered in 1913 before Wilson’s inauguration, some 470,000 people descended on Washington in 2017 to support women’s rights after Donald Trump’s inauguration. Their signature pink hats may be gathering dust, but for many women the political awakening continues.

See at: <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/magazine/2020/08/a-century-after-womens-suffrage-the-fight-for-equality-isnt-over-feature/>

## **Recommended Reading**

UN Women Annual Report 2019–2020



This report tells UN Women’s story over the last year. It shares how we and our many partners are striding forward to realize a better world for women and girls—one of equality and empowerment. Looking forward, we will draw on our full resources and experiences in protecting and advancing the rights of all women and girls. That is what we do and who we are, as a leader, mobilizer, convenor, provider of programmes, and partner for change. The challenges are large, but as we build bridges and bring people together to set an agenda for equality, not insurmountable.



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- [Annual report \(PDF, 1.6MB\)](#)

Access at: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2020/06/annual-report-2019-2020>

## Report of the Secretary General on Gender Mainstreaming

The present report, submitted pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 2019/2, assesses progress in the implementation of accountability frameworks for gender mainstreaming of the United Nations system at the global and country levels and in the operational activities of the United Nations development system.

It draws on United Nations entities’ reports under the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and the United Nations country team System-wide Action Plan gender equality scorecard, the United Nations Sustainable Development Group information management system and on secondary sources.

## Data and violence against women in politics: Expert group meeting report and recommendations



UN Women organized an Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on “Data and violence against women in politics” (VAWP) on 4–5 December 2019, in New York, as a part of its ongoing efforts to tackle this issue. Being recognized as one of the key deterrents to women’s political participation, VAWP has captured global attention, but comparative data remains unavailable. Internationally agreed indicators and data collection methods to measure incidence or prevalence do not yet exist.

The EGM helped map existing knowledge tools, databases, and surveys as sources of data on VAWP, and facilitated the exchange of lessons learned, experiences, and good practices in data collection.

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- [Publication \(PDF, 425KB\)](#)

Access at <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2020/08/eqm-report-data-and-violence-against-women-in-politics>

**Are you ready for change?**

Gender equality attitudes study 2019



## Are you ready for change? Gender equality attitudes study 2019

This study serves as an evidence-based instrument that demonstrates how leveraging attitudinal change can be used as a critical tactic towards advancing gender equality. The findings have the potential to inform policymakers, advertisers, private sector leaders, civil society, and decision-makers on challenging discriminatory attitudes and gender roles that perpetuate gender inequality and women's subordinate status in society.

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- [Publication \(PDF, 488KB\)](#)

Access at: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2020/06/gender-equality-attitudes-study-2019>

## More than a Lifetime Away: World Faces 100-Year Wait for Gender Parity Global Gender Gap Report 2020–WEF



This year's report highlights the growing urgency for action. Without the equal inclusion of half of the world's talent, we will not be able to deliver on the promise of the Fourth Industrial Revolution for all of society, grow our economies for greater shared prosperity or achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals. At the present rate of change, it will take nearly a century to achieve parity, a timeline we simply cannot accept in today's globalized world, especially among younger generations who hold increasingly progressive views of gender equality.

This is the finding of the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report 2020,

<https://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2020/press-release/>

## Women in Parliament 1995-2020 25 years in Review IPU

In the past 25 years, the overall percentage of women in parliaments has more than doubled, reaching 24.9 per cent in 2020, up from 11.3 in 1995. In lower and single houses of parliament, the percentage of seats held by women increased from 11.6 to 24.9 per cent. Upper houses saw the percentage increase from 9.4 to 24.6 per cent.

In 1995, no parliament had reached gender parity. In 2020, four countries have At least 50 per cent women in their lower or single chambers, and one has over 60 per cent of seats held by women (Rwanda).

Over a 25-year span, the largest progress in women's representation has been achieved by Rwanda, the United Arab Emirates, Andorra and Bolivia, with +57, +50, +42.8 and + 42.3 percentage points gained between 1995 and 2020,

## Understanding organizational barriers to a more inclusive workplace - McKinsey Report

McKinsey's research has shown that diversity can help organizations increase innovation, reconsider entrenched ways of thinking, and improve financial performance.<sup>1</sup> Organizations can take full advantage of the perspectives of a diverse workforce only if leaders and employees enjoy a sense of inclusion,<sup>2</sup>

Survey results show that many employees do not feel fully included at work and want their organizations to do more to advance inclusion and diversity. To do so, companies can address four factors

1. Diverse, inclusive leadership
2. Meritocracy and initiatives to increase fairness in performance evaluations
3. Sponsorship
4. Substantive access to senior leaders

Access at:  
<https://www.mckinsey.com/~/media/McKinsey/Business%20Functions/Organization/Our%20Insights/Understanding%20organizational%20barriers%20to%20a%20more%20inclusive%20workplace/Understanding-organizational-barriers-to-a-more-inclusive-workplace.pdf>

## Websites

Represent Women

Access at: [https://www.representwomen.org/our\\_mission#what\\_is\\_gender\\_parity](https://www.representwomen.org/our_mission#what_is_gender_parity)

## Films

Represent is equal parts personal and political, journeying through life on and off the campaign trail to tell the stories of female candidates from vastly different communities, support systems, and political parties. The politics may be local, but for these women, the stakes are high.

**Access at:** <https://kartemquin.com/films/represent>

## UN Women Info

### ***Employment opportunities***

You can find a monthly list of vacancy announcements at:

<http://www.unwomen.org/about-us/employment>

You can read Network online at: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/fpnetworks.htm>

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