



# SPORTS FOR GENERATION EQUALITY FRAMEWORK<sup>1</sup>

Driving implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action  
through the Power of the Sport Ecosystem

UN Women invites members of the sport ecosystem to join the Sports for Generation Equality Initiative to accelerate progress on a set of common principles and aligned objectives that will harness the power of sport in making gender equality a reality *in* and *through* sport.

Under the leadership of UN Women, the Sports for Generation Equality initiative will constitute a neutral space for enhancing cooperation among members to leverage the and share knowledge and resources and to catalyzing innovation.

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<sup>1</sup> Inspired by the UNFCCC's [Sports for Climate Action Framework](#)

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*“Women’s rights are human rights”  
para. 14, Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995)*

## 1. Background

Gender equality is not only a right, but the best chance we have in meeting some of the most pressing challenges of our time. And, yet, not a single country in the world can claim to have achieved gender equality. Promises remain unfulfilled and real change has been too slow for the majority of women and girls.

In 2020, the most visionary agenda for the empowerment of women and girls – The Beijing Platform for Action (1995) – will be 25 years old. In 1995 it was adopted by 189 member states and addresses 12 Critical Areas of Concern<sup>2</sup> with strategic objectives identified for each area of concern. The Beijing Platform for Action is a guideline to removing the systematic barriers that hold women and girls back and, until now, remains as the most ambitious agenda for achieving gender equality. Sport is explicitly referenced in the Beijing Platform for Action.

The International Charter of Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport, revised in 2015, recognizes a fundamental right to physical education, physical activity and sport and specifies that “equal opportunity to participate and be involved at all supervision and decision-making levels in physical education, physical activity and sport, whether for the purpose of recreation, health promotion or high performance, is the right of every girl and every woman that must be actively enforced.”

More recently, the Kazan Action Plan established a policy framework linking sport policies and programmes with prioritized SDGs. As such it is a main international reference for policy coherence in the field of sport. One of its five actions committed to “Conduct a feasibility study on the establishment of a Global Observatory for Women, Sport, Physical Education and Physical Activity”. The feasibility study is underway at the time of writing.

Achieving gender equality and women’s empowerment is also key to meet the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by world leaders in 2015, as a roadmap for progress that is sustainable and leaves no one behind. This includes Goal 5 “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”.

The Generation Equality movement, led by UN Women, is an invitation to bring in new partners and generations to embrace and revitalize the historic Beijing Platform and to make gender equality a lived reality. The sports ecosystem and its various stakeholders have a strong role to play, especially with recent momentum escalating across the sport sector in favor of gender equality.

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<sup>2</sup> 1. Women and poverty; 2. Education and training of women; 3. Women and Health; 4. Violence against women ; 5. Women and armed conflict; 6. Women and the economy; 7. Women in power and decision-making; 8. Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women; 9. Human rights of women; 10. Women and the media; 11. Women and the environment; 12. The girl child.

## 2. The Power of Sport

Sport holds enormous capacity to propel gender equality and women and girls' empowerment. It mobilizes the global community and speaks to youth. It unites across national barriers and cultural differences. It is a powerful tool to convey important messages in a positive and celebratory environment – often to mass audiences.

In recent years, audiences have demonstrated a rapidly growing interest in women's sports. Women's movements in many countries have fought for and won access to practice sports and attend matches, and in a few cases achieve equal pay in prize money. Female athletes have become legends and inspiring role models to both women and men globally, making the most of their venerated status to raise awareness around gender issues and to demand change.

Many actors in the sport ecosystem, including sport institutions are also making significant strides to drive change. For example, organizations are developing their sport at the grassroots level for women and girl, implementing gender equality strategies, safeguarding policies, increasing the participation of women in leadership and at all levels of the profession, increasing resource allocation, doing better and more media coverage, marketing free from bias and promoting women's achievements, and more. However, until now, many of these initiatives have been working in relative isolation, leading to missed opportunities of learning and scaling the best practices.

As stated in the SDG 17 - strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development - the global goals will be achieved only if there is policy coordination and coherence in multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, building on the experiences of each partner.

By joining in a powerful multi-stakeholder coalition - consisting of governments, United Nations organizations, sport for development and peace organizations, civil society, sport federations, event organizers, leagues, teams, brands, marketers, media, and sport influencers, etc. - the sport ecosystem will multiply impact for gender equality and women and girls' empowerment by learning from one another and accelerating efforts to:

- Promote women's leadership and gender equality in governance models
- Prevent and respond to gender-based violence
- Undertake to close the gap in investment in women's sport and promote equal economic opportunities for women and girls
- Promote women's equal participation and bias free representation in media
- Provide equal opportunities for girls in sports, physical activity and physical education

Working together under a shared vision and set of principles, with serious commitment to a common agenda, along with monitoring and reporting progress on aligned indicators, the sport sector will have a significant impact on gender equality world-wide.

### 3. Sports for Generation Equality Principles

The Sports for Generation Equality Principles gives the sport ecosystem the opportunity to be a leader in advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in all their diversity in and through sports.

Principle 1: Undertake efforts to promote women’s leadership and gender equality in governance models

- Promote women into decision making roles in sports organizations
- Ensure gender equality principles are embedded in organisational strategies and policy documents
- Build a pipeline for female candidates for governance roles and promote gender balance in electoral processes
- Increase training opportunities to increase women’s capacities for advancement
- Ensure that existing policies are gender-sensitive – identifying factors that impact women and men differently –inclusive and that organizational culture advances equality.
- Review the requirements for board membership, and other governance bodies and committees, to remove any discrimination or bias against women.
- Where appropriate create gender equality committees and/or departments to develop Gender Equality strategies and manage requisite resources.

Principle 2: Undertake efforts to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls in and through sports

- Develop and implement safeguarding policies and procedures, including reporting mechanisms, appropriate remediation, and support in consultation with affected persons
- Enlist the visible support of athletes and other prominent figures as role models as part of prevention strategies
- Strengthen legislation to prevent and treat violence against women and girls in sport
- Promote zero tolerance of non-accidental violence against women and girls in sport;
- Improve education and awareness amongst athletes and entourage<sup>3</sup> members;
- Improve cooperation and collaboration with sports organizations and other partners to improve the effectiveness of safeguarding policies and procedures.

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<sup>3</sup> The entourage comprises all people associated with athlete’s including, without limitation, managers, agents, coaches, medical staff, sponsors, lawyers, etc)

Principle 3: Undertake to close the gap in investment in women's sport and promote equal economic opportunities for women and girls

- Increase investments in the development of women's sports
- Increase support to equalize playing conditions for women and men
- Ensure an equal living wage for women in sport (e.g. athletes, coaches, technical officials, sports reporters, etc) to allow them to dedicate time to their sport careers
- Strive for equal pay in prize money
- Strive for gender balance in professional roles (coaching, officials, etc)
- Increase opportunities for women athletes to benefit from sponsorships
- Expand post-competition career opportunities through mentorship and support to career transition for female athletes

Principle 4: Undertake efforts to promote women's equal participation and bias-free representation in sports media, including communications to eliminate harmful gender stereotypes and to promote positive role models

- Increase the number of female journalists in sports media
- Tackle the gender stereotypes that exclude women from sport media
- Eliminate harassment of female journalists
- Increase investment in female competitions, to increase visibility and investments from the sports industry
- Increase the percentage of women's sport reporting in traditional and social media
- Eliminate sexist and stereotypical portrayal of female athletes in all forms of communication (e.g. advertising, news, marketing campaigns, etc)
- Amplify the voice of female athletes as role models including through marketing campaigns, airtime and media coverage for competitions, public recognition, etc.
- Enlist support of male champions as allies to shatter gender bias and stereotypes
- Incorporate messaging for gender equality in and around major tournaments and other sporting events

Principle 5: Undertake efforts to support equal opportunities for girls in sports, physical activity and physical education.

- Eliminate the barriers that girls face to access and participate in sports in formal and informal settings, including intersecting forms of discrimination such as race, ethnicity, religion, impairment, nationality and migration status
- Address the gender gap in the drop-out rate between boys and girls, especially around adolescence
- Create safe spaces for girls to play
- Legislate for equal resources for boys and girls in public institutions
- Expand opportunities to combine sport with life skills training for girls

- Create opportunities to educate boys and men about the benefits of gender equality through sport
- Expand legacy programmes associated with major sporting events to increase opportunities for girls to participate in sport

Principle 6: Agree to monitor and publicly report on progress on an annual basis

- Members will submit a progress report on the implementation of the Principles on an annual basis.
- UN Women will consolidate and publish an annual report of members' progress.
- As the Global Observatory for Women, Sport, Physical Education and Physical Activity is established, it is intended to play a key role in monitoring progress on these commitments and as a hub of knowledge.

### 3. Modalities of work

The delivery of the Sports for Generation Equality Initiative will be through individual organizational commitments and work. The Sports for Generation Equality initiative does not constitute a new formal initiative or registered organization, but work is carried out by the signatories and coordinated by UN Women secretariat.

#### Expectations of Members

Organizations are invited to sign up to the principles regardless of their current stage or the development of gender equality. Members are committing to specify at the time of the announcement of their membership substantial, explicit and measurable actions that outline how their organization will contribute to the advancement of at least one of the Principles. A template for this is included in the membership package

Members are also encouraged to:

- Strengthen or develop comprehensive strategies for the advancement of gender equality within their respective institutions;
- Monitor and submit a progress report on the implementation of the Principles on an annual basis;
- Advocate for gender equality in and through sports in communications;
- To work in a spirit of collaboration among members to meet the collective objectives and supporting knowledge generation and sharing.

Activities from members requiring resources for their implementation shall be budgeted for by the participating organizations, either through own sources of funding or through joint fund raising. Members in a position to contribute are invited to offset costs, associated with the work of the UN Women Secretariat through a voluntary contribution to be discussed with UN Women. The UN Women Secretariat will develop a workplan to reflect the use of funds.

### Intellectual property and logo use

All members are encouraged to promote the initiative through the wide dissemination of and association with the Generation Equality logo.

Any products or outputs resulting from the work of participating organizations will be free of copyright and publicly accessible.

No participating member may represent or make statements on behalf of the other members of the Sports for Generation Equality Initiative, unless this has been agreed by all members.

The participation of members will be recognized by the UN Women secretariat in relevant communications and events. Such participation may also be reflected in the members' own communications, by stating that they are a member of the Sports for Generation Equality Initiative.

Members of the Sports for Generation Equality Initiative are not entitled to use the name or logo of UN Women without the express permission by the UN Women secretariat in writing.

The UN Women secretariat and the members of the Sports for Generation Equality Initiative may not use the name, brand or logo of any of the other members without their express and prior permission-

The UN Women secretariat will deploy with its existing platforms (website, social media, international conferences such as the Commission on the Status of Women, etc) and those of its partners such as Generation Equality/ Beijing +25, the Global Observatory for Women, Sport, Physical Education and Physical Activity (as this develops), the International Conference of Ministers and Senior Officials Responsible for Physical Education and Sport ("MINEPS") and the Intergovernmental Committee for Physical Education and Sport ("CIGEPS"), as well as its web and social media channels to inspire action, track progress and/or highlight success and provide recognition.

The members of the Sports for Generation Equality Initiative shall take into due account all regulations applicable to them that relate to antitrust or anticompetitive behaviours and shall refrain from any such behaviours during or in relation to their participation in the Sports for Generation Equality meetings, events and related activities.

### UN Women Secretariat

UN Women Secretariat will facilitate organizations' commitments and work by:

- Sharing regular updates;
- Coordinating strategic outreach opportunities and support to growing the membership;
- Consolidating the inputs from members to prepare progress reports;
- Coordinating communication promoting Generation Equality activities by the members and networking/ learning among members;
- More specific actions to be detailed as the Initiative grows.

## 4. Sport for Generation Equality Declaration

Recognizing that:

1. The global commitments and overall vision established in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action remain relevant, yet unfulfilled.
2. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action informs the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including Goal 5 *“Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”*.
3. Delivering on the gender equality agenda also contributes to and has a multiplier effect on the broader Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development.
4. In line with SDG 17 *“Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development”*, sports organizations can make major contributions to the realization of these goals.
5. All members of the sport ecosystem, regardless of size or geography, have opportunities to take actions that will result in progress toward gender equality.

We, the members of the Sport for Generation Equality Initiative commit to support the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls - in and through sport - and affirm our commitment to Generation Equality on behalf of our organizations. We commit to:

1. Undertake efforts to promote women’s leadership and gender equality in governance models
2. Undertake efforts to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls in and through sports
3. Undertake to close the gap in investment in women’s sport and promote equal economic opportunities for women and girls
4. Undertake efforts to promote women’s equal participation and bias-free representation in sports media, including communications to eliminate harmful gender stereotypes and to promote positive role models
5. Undertake efforts to support equal opportunities for girls in sports, physical activity and physical education

By

1. Taking action;
2. Advocating for gender equality in and through sports in communications;
3. Supporting knowledge generation and sharing;
4. Working in a spirit of collaboration among members to meet the collective objectives;
5. Monitoring and reporting on progress.

## 5. Letter of Commitment

To: The Executive Director of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)

Recognizing the critical need for deepened commitment and action from a diverse array of partners from around the globe to revitalize and inspire a new generation around the relevance and urgency of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and accelerate the transformative change needed to achieve gender equality, including in and through sport, I am pleased to confirm that [Organization] supports the vision outlined in the Sports for Generation Equality Framework.

With this communication, we express our intent to contribute to the implementation of the Sports for Generation Equality Principles and commit to working collaboratively with our peers and relevant stakeholders to develop, implement and enhance the gender equality agenda in and through sports.

[Organisation] will communicate this commitment to our stakeholders and the general public and will report publicly on progress.

Yours Sincerely,

Signature

Place

Date

Please send your signed letter of commitment to the UN Women secretariat at:  
[Jennifer.cooper@unwomen.org](mailto:Jennifer.cooper@unwomen.org)

## Annex: Beijing Platform for Action and Kazan Action Plan Inform the Sport for Generation Equality Principles

Sports for Generation Equality <i>Principles</i>	Kazan Action Plan Action 4 <i>Objectives</i>	Beijing Platform for Action <i>Critical Areas of Concern</i>
Principle 1: Undertake efforts to promote women’s leadership and gender equality in governance models	(iv) Foster women’s access to decision-making positions within public sport authorities and sports organizations	Women in power and decision-making
Principle 2: Undertake efforts to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls in and through sports	(vi) Build awareness, encourage dialogue and establish protective and treatment measures regarding all forms of gender-based violence that impacts girls’ and women’s participation in physical education, physical activity and sport	Violence against women
Principle 3: Undertake to close the gap in investment in women’s sport and promote equal economic opportunities for women and girls	(viii) Promote investment in women’s and girls’ participation in sport, including access to infrastructures and funding	Women and the economy
Principle 4: Undertake efforts to promote women’s equal participation and bias-free representation in sports media, including communications to eliminate harmful gender stereotypes and to promote positive role models	(vii) Raise awareness about the media portrayal of women in sport	Women and the media
	(ii) Build awareness and encourage dialogue on physical education, physical activity and sport for girls and women	Women and the media
Principle 5: Undertake efforts to support equal opportunities for girls in sports, physical activity and physical education.	(i) Support capacity-building for gender-mainstreamed sport policy and action plans (v) Foster girls and women’s participation in sports, physical activity and physical education in all capacities and at all levels	The Girl Child
Principle 6: Agree to monitor and publicly report on progress on an annual basis	(iii) Monitor and evaluate the progress of SDG 5 as it relates to sport	
	(ix) Initiate and promote relevant research	