



PRESIDIUM *for* **CHANGE**
FOR A BETTER WORLD

PRESIDIUM MODEL UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE 2024

UNCSW

BACKGROUND GUIDE

UNITED NATIONS
COMMISSION ON THE
STATUS OF WOMEN



AGENDA:

Deliberation over the roadmap
to achieve Gender Equality by
2030.



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LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Dear Participants,

This document has been made with the purpose of guiding you in your understanding of the agenda and **should not be used as the sole reference for research**. We realise that the topic at hand is both vast and complex and it's an advice for all of you to look at the agenda with a multi-dimensional approach in order to allow the debate to be more holistic and substantially fulfilling.

With a few days left for the conference, we are really hopeful that you have already begun with your research and are leaving no stone unturned in contributing to the committee to the best of your ability. While this guide seeks to analyse certain issues which you could use as a medium of directing your research, we would appreciate you to go beyond this piece of work and come up with innovative discussions in committee.

We firmly believe and together we could make this conference a memorable experience which shall prove to be highly enriching in terms of your further conferences. So tie up your suits and pull up your socks, it's time to speak your minds out.

Happy researching!

Regards,

Executive Board

9th Edition of Presidium MUN

Presidium School, Gurgaon

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INTRODUCTION TO THE COMMITTEE

Official Website: [Commission on the Status of Women](#)

The United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW) was established in 1946 as a functional commission of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). It is the principal global intergovernmental body exclusively dedicated to promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women. Formed in the aftermath of World War II, the UNCSW was initially tasked with documenting the status of women globally and ensuring women's rights were included in post-war recovery and development efforts. Over time, it has evolved to become a critical platform for addressing issues such as political participation, gender-based violence, economic empowerment, and the social and legal status of women.

The UNCSW meets annually, gathering representatives from member states, UN entities, and civil society organisations to discuss progress on gender equality and women's empowerment worldwide. Its primary functions include reviewing global progress in implementing the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (a key framework for women's rights since 1995), making recommendations to governments and UN bodies, and setting global standards for women's rights and gender equality. The Commission also provides guidance on integrating gender perspectives into all aspects of international development policy, advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 5 on gender equality. It plays a vital role in mobilising international cooperation, fostering dialogue, and monitoring commitments to women's rights at the global and national levels.

INTRODUCTION TO THE AGENDA

Agenda: *Deliberation over the Roadmap to Achieve Gender Equality by 2030*

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Introduction

Gender equality, enshrined in Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5, is fundamental for achieving global development goals by 2030. This goal targets ending all forms of discrimination, ensuring equal opportunities in leadership, education, economic participation, and access to services for women and girls. Gender equality underpins the broader 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, emphasising that sustainable development cannot be achieved if gender inequality persists. However, with just a few years remaining before 2030, the world faces significant challenges, including entrenched patriarchal norms, economic disparities, and gender-based violence.

Global efforts toward gender equality have yielded some success, such as increased political participation of women, reduction in harmful practices like child marriage, and greater access to education for girls. Yet, progress has been uneven across regions, with marginalised women—particularly those in conflict zones, rural areas, and lower-income groups—continuing to face significant barriers. The roadmap to achieving gender equality involves addressing these gaps through gender-responsive policies, international cooperation, and targeted interventions that empower women economically, politically, and socially. This paper will explore the challenges, milestones, and actions necessary for realising the gender equality targets outlined in the 2030 Agenda, drawing on materials from UN Women, the UN's SDG framework, and other key reports.

Challenges to Achieving Gender Equality by 2030

Despite substantial progress, there remain pervasive barriers to gender equality. Economic inequality is a critical issue, with women earning significantly less than men and being overrepresented in low-wage, insecure jobs. Globally, women perform three times more unpaid care work than men, a burden that limits their economic opportunities and impacts their financial independence. According to UN Women, at the current pace, it will take over 200 years to close the gender pay gap in some regions. Additionally, women's access to decent work is often hindered by discriminatory laws and cultural norms that reinforce traditional gender roles.

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Gender-based violence (GBV) remains one of the most widespread human rights violations. An estimated 1 in 3 women worldwide experience physical or sexual violence in their lifetime, with the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbating the situation. Lockdowns and economic stress have led to increased rates of domestic violence, further limiting women's participation in public and economic life. Legal and policy frameworks to address GBV are often weak or poorly enforced, making it difficult for survivors to seek justice or support.

Other significant challenges include political underrepresentation, where women, despite some gains, remain grossly underrepresented in leadership positions across government and private sectors. As of 2020, women hold only 25% of parliamentary seats globally, far below what is needed for equal representation. In many countries, women are also systematically excluded from political processes, further entrenching gender disparities in decision-making.

Moreover, harmful traditional practices such as child marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM) continue to affect millions of girls, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. Although there have been efforts to eliminate these practices, they persist due to deeply rooted cultural norms and limited enforcement of laws.

Key Milestones in Gender Equality Achievements

Despite the obstacles, there have been notable achievements in advancing gender equality, particularly in areas such as education, health, and political participation. The global enrollment rate for girls in primary and secondary education has significantly increased over the past two decades, narrowing the gender gap in education. However, challenges remain at higher education levels, particularly in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) fields, where women are underrepresented.

Political participation has also improved, with more women holding elected offices and leadership positions than ever before. Rwanda, for example, has set a global example by

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achieving over 60% female representation in its parliament. This shift has led to the adoption of more gender-sensitive policies, highlighting the importance of women's leadership in governance.

There have also been declines in harmful practices like child marriage, particularly in regions where international and local NGOs work together with governments to provide education and economic opportunities for girls. UNICEF reports a 15% drop in the global rate of child marriage over the past decade, with the most significant improvements seen in South Asia.

Additionally, global efforts to combat gender-based violence have seen the implementation of several international initiatives. The Spotlight Initiative, a multi-year global campaign led by the European Union and United Nations, focuses on eliminating violence against women and girls through legal reform, education, and the strengthening of institutions to support survivors.

Gender-Responsive Implementation of the 2030 Agenda

Achieving gender equality by 2030 requires a gender-responsive approach to policy-making, ensuring that all efforts to advance the SDGs incorporate a focus on women and girls. This means addressing the specific barriers they face in accessing resources, services, and opportunities.

The UN Women report on Driving Gender-Responsive Implementation of the 2030 Agenda highlights the importance of integrating gender perspectives into all aspects of governance. This includes ensuring gender budgeting, where national and international budgets allocate funds specifically for programs that support women's empowerment. Countries like Mexico and Sweden have adopted gender-responsive budgeting to ensure that economic policies address gender disparities.

Legal reforms are another critical area, with several countries introducing laws to improve women's rights to property, education, and equal pay. However, enforcement remains a challenge

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in many regions, particularly where legal systems are weak or where cultural norms undermine women's access to justice.

Incorporating gender into climate action is also crucial, as climate change disproportionately affects women, particularly those in developing countries. Women are more likely to be dependent on natural resources for their livelihoods and less likely to be included in decision-making processes related to climate policy. Gender-responsive climate action, therefore, involves not only including women in decision-making but also providing them with the resources and support needed to adapt to changing environmental conditions.

Policies, Leadership, and International Cooperation

Leadership at both national and international levels is critical to advancing gender equality. Governments must prioritise gender equality in their national agendas and ensure that policies are both gender-sensitive and gender-inclusive. Political will is essential for driving legislative changes that promote women's rights and create environments where women can participate equally in all aspects of society.

International cooperation plays a significant role in this regard, with initiatives like the Beijing Platform for Action providing a comprehensive framework for gender equality. The Beijing Declaration, adopted by 189 countries in 1995, outlines key areas where governments must act, including combating violence against women, ensuring women's access to education and healthcare, and promoting women's economic independence.

The Spotlight Initiative and similar efforts underscore the importance of partnerships between governments, international organisations, and civil society in addressing global gender disparities. International cooperation also provides a platform for sharing best practices and lessons learned, allowing countries to benefit from the successes of others.

Roadmap to 2030: Actions and Recommendations

To ensure gender equality by 2030, concerted action is required across multiple fronts. Key recommendations include:

1. Strengthening Legal Protections: Governments must enact and enforce laws that protect women's rights in all areas of life, including work, education, and family. Laws addressing gender-based violence should be strengthened, and countries must ensure that survivors of violence have access to justice and support services.

2. Investing in Women's Economic Empowerment: Gender-responsive economic policies are crucial to closing the wage gap and ensuring equal access to financial services, credit, and markets. Governments and international organisations should invest in programs that support women entrepreneurs and provide vocational training for women in underserved areas.

3. Promoting Women's Leadership: Increasing women's representation in political and economic leadership positions is essential for ensuring that gender perspectives are included in decision-making processes. Countries should adopt quotas and other measures to ensure that women have an equal voice in governance.

4. Ending Gender-Based Violence: Efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls must be scaled up, with a focus on prevention, education, and support for survivors. Initiatives like the Spotlight Initiative should be expanded to more regions, with greater resources allocated to addressing the root causes of violence.

5. Supporting Girls' Education: Education is a key driver of gender equality. Governments must ensure that girls have equal access to education at all levels, with a particular focus on keeping girls in school and encouraging their participation in STEM fields.

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6. Ensuring Gender-Responsive Climate Action: Climate policies must be gender-sensitive, recognizing the disproportionate impact of climate change on women and ensuring that they have the resources and opportunities to adapt.

Conclusion

Achieving gender equality by 2030 is both a moral imperative and a necessary condition for global development. While progress has been made, significant challenges remain, particularly in areas like economic inequality, political underrepresentation, and gender-based violence. The roadmap to 2030 requires coordinated efforts from governments, international organizations, and civil society, with a focus on gender-responsive policies and inclusive development strategies. By addressing these challenges and taking bold action, the world can make significant strides toward a future where gender equality is not just a goal, but a reality.

Sources for Research

1. UN Women. (2016). Driving Gender-Responsive Implementation of the 2030 Agenda. [UN Women]([DRIVING THE GENDER-RESPONSIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT](#))
2. United Nations. (n.d.). Gender Equality. Retrieved from [United Nations]([United Nations: Gender equality and women's empowerment](#))
3. Graduate Women International. (2016). Driving the Gender-Responsive Implementation of the 2030 Agenda. [1 Driving the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Analysis report by Lakshmi Puri, U](#)

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