



Equal *IS GREATER*

Time to act for gender equality and women's empowerment and rights



Photo: UN Women/Ryan Brown

Equal **MATTERS**

Equal is greater. Equal adds up. When actions deliver for women and girls, everyone benefits.

The world has a plan to achieve gender equality and the rights and empowerment of women and girls. That plan is the [Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action](#). It is designed to unleash progress for a world that needs solutions.

Equal IS AGREED

In 1995 at the Fourth World Conference on Women, attended by 17,000 delegates from around the globe, leaders from 189 countries adopted the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. It remains the world's most widely endorsed, and visionary, agenda for women's rights.

History shifted with the introduction of a comprehensive, actionable agreement to achieve equal rights for women and girls in every society.

Women and men, girls and boys own the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action – both those who created it and new generations since then. Together, they created an action plan grounded in the lived experiences of women and reflecting their ideas and aspirations.

Twelve areas of critical concern in the platform cover areas of life requiring the most urgent action to deliver gender equality for women and men, in all their diversity: poverty, education and training, health, violence against women, armed conflict, the economy, power and decision-making, mechanisms for the advancement of women, human rights, the media, the environment and the girl child. The plan includes numerous proposed actions, including commitments to:

- Put gender equality in every national policy, budget and plan.
- Create institutions dedicated to gender equality.
- Guarantee an equal footing for women in the economy.
- Take comprehensive measures to eliminate violence against women.
- Apply gender quotas to correct gaps in political leadership.
- Tackle the unique challenges of girls and young women.

CRITICAL AREAS OF CONCERN IN THE BEIJING PLATFORM FOR ACTION:



Girl child



Environment



Institutional
mechanisms



Economy



Violence
against women



Human
rights



Health



Women
in power



Media



Armed
conflict



Education



Poverty



Equal IS OURS

While governments adopted the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, it is an inclusive agenda that belongs to everyone. Thirty years on, it remains a touchstone for everyone committed to acting for gender equality.

Equal IS TRANSFORMATION

2025 marks the thirtieth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

In working towards the crucial goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals, the ambitious roadmap developed in Beijing is more valuable than ever.

Gender equality is among the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. But it is also more than just one part of the 2030 Agenda. It is the single best way to achieve progress across every goal, from ending poverty to improving health to taking climate action.

Right now, the world is missing out on a huge potential gender equality dividend. Achieving equality could inject an additional \$12 trillion into the global economy.¹ Ending the digital gender divide could provide over \$500 billion. Closing gaps in skills could add \$10 trillion more.²



When countries act on the platform's 12 areas of concern, they see the benefits. For example, those that have passed laws to stop domestic violence have on average cut rates nearly in half.³

Yet not a single country has fully achieved gender equality. What's more, when crises such as climate-related disasters, conflicts or pandemics interact with existing inequalities, they make them worse, undermining the world's efforts to react and recover.

Despite this, progress is unstoppable. Change is here. Ever more people, especially young people, know the value of gender equality for their lives and their world. They are aware of and demanding their rights.

¹ McKinsey Global Institute (2015). The Power of Parity: How Advancing Women's Equality Can Add \$12 Trillion to Global Growth.

² UN Women and UNDESA (2024). The Gender Snapshot 2024.

³ UN Women and UNDESA (2024). The Gender Snapshot 2024.

Equal **IS ACHIEVABLE**

As the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action turns 30, we have the chance to take stock and reenergize our efforts. To do that, UN Women is calling for action in three key areas to accelerate progress and achieve equality. These are:



DRIVING FOCUSED CHANGE ON THE GROUND

When governments, the private sector and others at the national level focus on concrete priority actions, big changes can happen. It's not about doing everything at once. It's about doing first what delivers the most with limited resources – and doing it together.



BACKING POWER FOR THE PEOPLE

Women's rights organizations, youth movements and civil society in all its forms play crucial roles in demanding human rights. They need room to call for changes, and their demands should be acted upon. To be fully effective, organizations mobilizing for change require sufficient resources.



MAKING THE MULTILATERAL SYSTEM THE MOST POWERFUL FORCE FOR EQUALITY IT CAN BE

The United Nations, the international financial institutions and regional organizations all must play their parts. It's about making sure that they are deliberate in efforts to achieve gender equality and held accountable for progress.

Equal IS ACTION

We know much of what we need to do. UN Women is proposing six priority areas for action that we believe offer some of the best return on investments of energy and resources. These areas cover what we have learned works best, both from our own programmes and those of our partners, women's rights organizations, and other actors over the last 30 years, including through the Generation Equality Forum⁴ launched on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

Delegates in Beijing in 1995 would have recognized some of these areas. Others have emerged since then. They are:

- 1.** Accelerate gender parity in national and local government by applying temporary special measures to rapidly increase women's shares of decision-making positions.
- 2.** Adopt and fund national action plans to end violence against women, and support and coordinate with community-led mechanisms to extend the reach of services.
- 3.** Centre women and girls in a global just transition to green economies by prioritizing them in developing new skills and gaining green jobs.
- 4.** Bridge the digital gender gap by providing women with equal access to technology and its benefits, including mobile phones and the Internet.
- 5.** Transform the care economy to support women's economic empowerment by increasing national budgets for equitable, quality public care services.
- 6.** Drive accountability for the women, peace and security agenda and gender-responsive humanitarian action by adopting fully financed national action plans and funding local women's organizations leading responses to crises and conflicts.

UN Women also believes that putting youth at the heart of efforts across these six areas is the best way support their success and leadership, both today and tomorrow.

⁴ <https://forum.generationequality.org/>

Equal *IS PROMISES DELIVERED*

Thirty years ago, people from every part of the world committed to achieving gender equality. They showed that we can agree on the imperative of equality – and a roadmap to get there.

In 2025, it can happen again. With a plan in place, it only remains for us to fully act on it. We have the opportunity to deliver at last on the overdue promises of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. It is in our hands to achieve an equal world where all voices are heard, all rights are respected and all people enjoy equal opportunity.

We invite you to join us.

Photo: UN Women/Ryan Brown



UN WOMEN IS THE UN ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO GENDER EQUALITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN. A GLOBAL CHAMPION FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS, UN WOMEN WAS ESTABLISHED TO ACCELERATE PROGRESS ON MEETING THEIR NEEDS WORLDWIDE.

UN Women supports UN Member States as they set global standards for achieving gender equality, and works with governments and civil society to design laws, policies, programmes and services needed to ensure that the standards are effectively implemented and truly benefit women and girls worldwide. It works globally to make the vision of the Sustainable Development Goals a reality for women and girls and stands behind women's equal participation in all aspects of life, focusing on four strategic priorities: Women lead, participate in and benefit equally from governance systems; Women have income security, decent work and economic autonomy; All women and girls live a life free from all forms of violence; Women and girls contribute to and have greater influence in building sustainable peace and resilience, and benefit equally from the prevention of natural disasters and conflicts and humanitarian action. UN Women also coordinates and promotes the UN system's work in advancing gender equality.



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