



# Gender Mainstreaming Perspectives Throughout UN Systems

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## Introduction

Gender equality is one of the most important goals of the United Nations. But it's not just about having equal numbers of men and women in meetings or leadership roles. It is about making sure that every policy, program, and decision the UN makes considers how it affects people of all genders.

When we talk about gender at the United Nations, we are not only talking about women's issues, but we are also talking about fairness, equal opportunities, and making sure that both men's and women's needs and voices are

considered in every decision. "Mainstreaming a gender perspective" means including gender equality as a key part of all UN policies, programs, and activities, rather than treating it as a side issue.



It means looking at how different issues like climate change, education, health, or peacekeeping impact men, women, and gender-diverse people differently. For example, women and girls often face unique challenges during wars, humanitarian crises, or in accessing education and healthcare. If the UN does not consider these differences, its solutions and policies might leave half of the world's population behind.

The UN led global progress in promoting gender equality. For example, in recent years, the UN has made progress through initiatives like the UN Women agency and gender equality targets in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), but challenges remain. Some departments still treat gender as a side issue, and many countries disagree on how far gender policies should go. In 2024, the UN's Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) released a new report pushing for stronger action across the

entire system.<sup>1</sup> It calls for better training, more gender data, and stronger leadership to make sure gender equality is not just a goal, but it is part of everything the UN does.

But the international politics of gender changed dramatically in recent years, as conservative leaders in Hungary, the Russian Federation and the United States became harshly critical of the UN for sacrificing traditional values. While their position remains a minority in the ECOSOC, their opposition could be a significant factor at ODUMUNC.

This issue brief will explore why mainstreaming a gender perspective is important, what progress has been made, and the challenges the UN still faces. It will also look at the role of different countries, blocs, and UN bodies in pushing this agenda forward, as well as possible actions the international community can take on gender equality and related issues at ODUMUNC.

## Background

The idea of mainstreaming a gender perspective throughout the United Nations systems began gaining serious attention after the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. There, world leaders agreed that gender equality should not be treated as a separate issue but as a central concern in all areas of policy and programming. This led to the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action, which called on governments and international organizations to integrate gender perspectives into every part of

their work.<sup>2</sup> In 1997, the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) defined gender mainstreaming in its agreed conclusions as “the process of assessing implications for women and men in any planned action.”<sup>3</sup>



Since then, the UN has taken steps to make gender mainstreaming a reality. In 2006, the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) endorsed the System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP) but was launched in 2012. This sets performance standards for UN agencies. These standards include things like collecting gender-specific data, hiring gender experts, and making sure budgets reflect gender priorities.<sup>45</sup> However, progress has been uneven. Some agencies have made strong improvements, while others are still lagging behind.

ECOSOC has passed several resolutions titled “Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programs in the United Nations system.” These include Resolutions 1998/43, 2001/41, 2002/23, and 2011/6. These resolutions

<sup>1</sup> United Nations, n.d. “Reports | Economic and Social Council,” United Nations, n.d., <https://ecosoc.un.org/en/documents/reports/year/2024>

<sup>2</sup> UN Women, n.d., “Gender Mainstreaming,” UN Women – Headquarters, <https://www.unwomen.org/en/how-we-work/un-system-coordination/gender-mainstreaming>.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid

<sup>4</sup> UN Women, n.d., “Promoting UN Accountability (UN-SWAP and UNCT-Swap),” UN Women – Headquarters, n.d.,

<https://www.unwomen.org/en/how-we-work/un-system-coordination/promoting-un-accountability>.

<sup>5</sup> CEB, n.d., “UN System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (SWAP) | United Nations - CEB,” CEB., <https://unsceb.org/un-system-wide-action-plan-gender-equality-and-empowerment-women-swap>.

call on all parts of the UN system to embed gender perspectives in their work.<sup>6</sup>

In 2024, the UN Secretary-General released a new report to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), highlighting both achievements and ongoing challenges. The report notes that while many UN entities have adopted gender policies, only a few have fully met the performance targets set by UN-SWAP. It also points out that gender equality is still often treated as a “tick-box” exercise, rather than a meaningful part of decision-making.<sup>7</sup>

One major challenge is the lack of gender-disaggregated data. Without clear information on how policies affect men, women, and gender-diverse people differently, it is hard to design effective solutions. Another issue is leadership: the report stresses that senior UN officials must take gender mainstreaming seriously and make it part of their strategic planning, not just leave it to gender specialists.<sup>8</sup>

The 2024 ECOSOC report also connects gender mainstreaming to the broader goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It argues that without gender equality, none of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), from ending poverty to achieving peace, can be fully realized.<sup>9</sup>

Without mainstreaming, some UN programs may unintentionally ignore how different gender roles, cultural norms, and inequalities affect men and women differently. For example, policies

meant to support development, education, or health might benefit men more simply because they’re designed without gender gaps in mind. This can reinforce or even worsen inequalities.<sup>10</sup>

Another reason is that gender equality is not only a human rights issue, but it also improves social, economic, and health outcomes. When women and girls are empowered, societies tend to be more stable, economies grow more, and everyone benefits. The UN recognizes this in the SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) and other mandates.<sup>11</sup>

In short, mainstreaming a gender perspective is not just about fairness. It is about making sure the UN’s work is effective, inclusive, and responsive to the real needs of people around the world.

## Current Issues

Despite decades of commitment, the United Nations still faces major obstacles in fully mainstreaming a gender perspective across its system. These challenges are not just technical; they reflect deeper issues of political will, leadership, and global inequality.

**Conflict and Crisis:** Finally, conflict and crisis situations make gender mainstreaming even harder. In 2024 alone, over 676 million women

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<sup>6</sup> UN Women, n.d., “Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective into All Policies and Programmes in the United Nations System (ECOSOC Resolution 1998/43),” UN Women, <https://www.unwomen.org/en/docs/1998/7/ecosoc-resolution-1998-43?utm>.

<sup>7</sup> United Nations, n.d., “Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective into All Policies and Programmes in the United Nations System :,” United Nations., <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4050356?v=pdf>.

<sup>8</sup> United Nations, n.d., “Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective into All Policies and Programmes in the United Nations System.” United Nations, <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n15/291/89/pdf/n1529189.pdf>.

<sup>9</sup> UN Women, n.d., “Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective into All Policies and Programmes in the United Nations System (ECOSOC Resolution 1998/43),” UN Women – Headquarters, <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n15/291/89/pdf/n1529189.pdf>.

<sup>10</sup> United Nations, n.d., “Mainstreaming the Gender Perspective into All Policies and Programmes in the UN System,” United Nations., <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/followup/main.htm?utm>.

<sup>11</sup> UN Women, “Gender Mainstreaming,” UN Women – Headquarters, <https://www.unwomen.org/en/how-we-work/un-system-coordination/gender-mainstreaming>.

and girls lived in areas affected by deadly conflict, the highest number in decades.<sup>12</sup> In these settings, women face increased risks of violence, poverty, and exclusion, yet gender-sensitive responses are often overlooked in emergency planning.



**Cultural and Political Resistance:** Political resistance also plays a role in the persistent challenges of gender mainstreaming. Some member states argue that gender policies interfere with national traditions or values. This can lead to watered-down resolutions or slow progress on key issues like reproductive rights, gender-based violence, and LGBTQ+ inclusion. This makes it difficult to reach agreement in UN debates and slows down the adoption of stronger resolutions.<sup>13</sup> The UN Women 2025 Gender Snapshot confirms that none of the gender equality targets under the SDGs are on track, partly due to political reluctance and lack of

consensus among member states.<sup>14</sup> Data indicates that only six countries have 50 percent or more women in single or lower houses: Rwanda (64 percent), Cuba (56%), Nicaragua (55 percent), Andorra (50 percent), Mexico (50 percent), and United Arab Emirates (50 percent)).<sup>15</sup>

**Lack of Gender-Disaggregated Data:** One of the biggest problems is the lack of gender-disaggregated data. Without clear statistics showing how policies affect men, women, and gender-diverse people differently, it's hard to design fair and effective programs. According to the 2024 Gender Snapshot by UN Women and the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, many countries still do not collect or report enough gender-specific data, especially in areas like climate change, water management, and humanitarian aid.<sup>16</sup>

**Lack of Resources and Funding:** Funding gaps are another major barrier. Many gender-focused programs are underfunded, and gender equality is often missing from core budgets. Without money, even the best policies cannot be put into action.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>12</sup>Ana Carmo, 2025, "Gender Equality: UN Women Calls for Political Will and Accelerated Global Action | UN News," United Nations, September 15, 2025, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/09/1165849>.

<sup>13</sup>Saskia Brechenmacher, 2025, "The New Global Struggle over Gender, Rights, and Family Values | Carnegie Endowment for International Peace," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, June 5, 2025, <https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2025/06/the-new-global-struggle-over-gender-rights-and-family-values?lang=en>.

<sup>14</sup>Ana Carmo, 2025, "Gender Equality: UN Women Calls for Political Will and Accelerated Global Action | UN News," United Nations, September 15, 2025, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/09/1165849>.

<sup>15</sup>United Nations, n.d., "Facts and Figures: Women's Leadership and Political Participation | Division for Inclusive Social Development (DISD)," United Nations, [https://social.desa.un.org/sdn/facts-and-](https://social.desa.un.org/sdn/facts-and-figures-womens-leadership-and-political-participation?utm=)

<figures-womens-leadership-and-political-participation?utm=>

<sup>16</sup>UN Women, 2024 "Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals: The Gender Snapshot 2024," UN Women – Headquarters,, <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2024/09/progress-on-the-sustainable-development-goals-the-gender-snapshot-2024>: United Nations, n.d., "The Gender Snapshot 2024 - SDG Indicators," United Nations, <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/gender-snapshot/2024/>.

<sup>17</sup>United Nations, 2025, "The Margins of the Budget: Gender Equality in Developing Countries Underfunded by \$420 Billion Annually | UN News," United Nations, July 1, 2025, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/07/1165161>; UN Women, 2015, "Regular Resources Report 2024: UN Women's Impact through Regular Resources," UN Women, 2015, <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital->



# Gender Mainstreaming Perspectives Throughout UN Systems



## Uneven Implementation Across UN Agencies:

Another challenge is uneven implementation across UN agencies. While some departments have strong gender policies and dedicated staff, others treat gender equality as a side issue. The 2024 ECOSOC report found that only a few UN entities have fully met the performance targets set by the UN-SWAP framework, which includes standards for leadership, budgeting, and accountability.<sup>18</sup>

The GEAP Progress Report acknowledges that while some UN entities have made significant strides in gender mainstreaming, others lag behind due to limited leadership commitment, inadequate resources, or weak accountability mechanisms.<sup>19</sup>

These challenges show that gender mainstreaming is not just a technical fix; it requires bold leadership, strong data, and real investment. Without these, the UN risks falling short of its promise to leave no one behind.

These challenges are important to resolve. Gender mainstreaming is not just about fairness; it also is about effectiveness. When gender perspectives are ignored, policies can unintentionally harm the very people they are meant to help. On the other hand, when gender is fully integrated, programs become more inclusive, more responsive, and more likely to succeed. As the UN Women Handbook states, gender mainstreaming is the core strategy for accelerating progress on gender equality and the empowerment of women.<sup>20</sup> Without it, the UN

cannot achieve the Sustainable Development Goals or uphold its commitment to human rights.

## Leading UN Actors

Mainstreaming a gender perspective across the UN system is a global effort led by committed countries, international organizations (IOs), and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). These actors shape policy, fund programs, and hold institutions accountable for delivering on gender equality.

### International Organizations (IOs)

**ECOSOC:** ECOSOC serves as the central UN forum for international economic and social issues, with the authority to pass resolutions, formulate policy recommendations, and monitor progress on global development goals.<sup>21</sup>

### Commission on the Status of Women (CSW):

CSW is the premier intergovernmental body dedicated to gender equality and women's empowerment. It plays a key role in setting global norms, agreeing on declarations, and developing guiding frameworks, notably the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. CSW brings together governments, UN entities, and civil society to shape global standards and

[library/publications/2025/09/regular-resources-report-2024](https://library/publications/2025/09/regular-resources-report-2024).

<sup>18</sup> UN Women, 2024, "Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals: The Gender Snapshot 2024," UN Women, <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2024/09/progress-on-the-sustainable-development-goals-the-gender-snapshot-2024>; UN Women, n.d. "UN-SWAP," UN SYSTEM COORDINATION, <https://gendercoordinationandmainstreaming.unwomen.org/un-swap>.

<sup>19</sup>Gender Equality Acceleration Plan, n.d., "Gender Equality Acceleration Plan Progress ...," Gender

Equality Acceleration Plan, n.d.,

[https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/2025/03/sg\\_geap\\_progress\\_report.pdf](https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/2025/03/sg_geap_progress_report.pdf).

<sup>20</sup>UN Women, 2022, "Handbook on Gender Mainstreaming for Gender Equality Results," UN Women, <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2022/02/handbook-on-gender-mainstreaming-for-gender-equality-results>.

<sup>21</sup> United Nations, January 2024, BRIEF II. ECOSOC Policy Dialogue and Guidance, <https://hlpf.un.org/sites/default/files/2024-02/BRIEF%201%202024.pdf>.

ensure that UN work incorporates a gender perspective.<sup>22</sup>

**Other UN agencies:** These bodies integrate gender perspectives into their specific sectors (for example, health, education, and environment). They contribute to the system's overall mainstreaming by adapting their programs. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), for instance, has a "Gender Community of Practice" for environmental programs.<sup>23</sup>

UNICEF, formally the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, has actively worked to mainstream gender into social protection strategies and programs, drawing on evidence from 74 low- and middle-income countries. Its 2021 report, co-published with UN Women, highlights how gender-responsive approaches in health, education, and social protection can improve outcomes for children and families, especially in vulnerable communities.<sup>24</sup>



<sup>22</sup>UN Women, n.d., "Commission on the Status of Women," UN Women – Headquarters, <https://www.unwomen.org/en/how-we-work/commission-on-the-status-of-women>: UN Women, January 17, 2018 "CSW Presentation Power Point 18," UN Women, [https://au.int/sites/default/files/newsevents/workingdocuments/33563-wd-csw\\_the\\_global\\_process\\_and\\_opportunities.pdf](https://au.int/sites/default/files/newsevents/workingdocuments/33563-wd-csw_the_global_process_and_opportunities.pdf).

<sup>23</sup>UNEP, n.d. "Equipping Women for Success: How UNEP's Gender Mainstreaming Initiatives Are Bridging the Gender Divide," UNEP, <https://www.unep.org/gef/news-and-stories/story/equipping-women-success-how-uneps-gender-mainstreaming-initiatives-are>.

<sup>24</sup>UN Women & UNICEF, June 2021, "Mainstreaming Gender into Social Protection

**UN Women** is the central UN agency responsible for coordinating all UN action on gender mainstreaming, offering technical support and monitoring progress across the UN system. UN Women has little real authority over UN agencies, and no power over Member States; it's role is to monitor progress, report on activity and coordinate action. It supports setting standards, helps with implementation, monitors, and provides technical assistance.<sup>25</sup>

**UNDP** (the United Nations Development Fund, the largest UN agency) works with countries on development and has its own Gender Equality Strategy (2022-2025) that commits it to helping mainstream gender in its work in governance, economic autonomy, etc.<sup>26</sup>

## Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

**ABANTU for Development:** It is an international women's non-governmental organization founded in 1991 in London by African women. It operates across Africa with offices in Ghana, Kenya, Tanzania, and Nigeria. The organization aims to empower African women in politics and economics by increasing their participation in decision-making at all

Strategies And ...," UN Women, <https://www.unicef.org/innocenti/media/5391/file/UNICEF-Mainstreaming-Gender-Social-Protection-Strategies-Programmes-2021.pdf>.

<sup>25</sup>UN Women, n.d., "UN WOMEN'S 2024 GLOBAL REACH AND COUNTRY HIGHLIGHTS Powering Change for All Women and girls," UN Women., <https://open.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2025-09/Brief-UN-Women-reach-2024-Global-en.pdf>: Human Rights Careers, n.d., "25 Organizations Fighting for Gender Equality," Human Rights Careers, <https://www.humanrightscareers.com/magazine/organizations-gender-equality/?utm>.

<sup>26</sup>UNDP, n.d., "Gender Equality Strategy 2022-2025," UNDP, <https://genderequalitystrategy.undp.org/?utm>.

levels: local, national, regional, and international.<sup>27</sup>

**Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID):** This is a global feminist membership organization that supports advocates and activists and works on resourcing women's rights, justice, challenging religious fundamentalism, etc. Its mission is to support feminist, women's rights, and gender justice movements to thrive, challenge systems of oppression, and co-create feminist realities.<sup>28</sup>

**CARE International:** CARE's Gender Equality and Inclusion Policy places gender equality at the heart of its mission to overcome poverty and social injustice. It emphasizes intersectionality, disability inclusion, and anti-racism as core principles. Its Vision 2030 commits to integrating gender equality across all programming, including humanitarian response and development initiatives.<sup>29</sup>

**Plan International:** Plan International's Global Approach to Programme and Influence centers on advancing children's rights and equality for girls. It applies a gender-transformative lens across all contexts: humanitarian, development, and advocacy. The organization uses its Child-Centered Community Development (CCCD) model to deliver inclusive programming and influence policy at local, national, and global levels.<sup>30</sup>

**Save the Children:** Save the Children's Gender Equality Annual Report 2023 outlines its strategy for achieving a gender-just future. It highlights efforts to empower 16.5 million women and girls since 2015 by integrating gender into all programming. The report showcases partnerships with women's rights organizations and networks to drive systemic change in both humanitarian and development settings.<sup>31</sup>

**Solidarity for African Women's Rights (SOAWR):** This is a coalition across many African countries that focuses on legal, policy, and social rights. They push for ratification and implementation of treaties, for example, the Maputo Protocol.<sup>32</sup>

These actors are essential because gender mainstreaming does not happen automatically. It requires leadership, funding, and constant pressure to ensure that gender equality is built into every part of the UN's work, not just mentioned in speeches.

**The Role of the United Nations (UN) in Addressing Migration in West Africa**  
**Monitoring and Accountability Tools:** The UN developed the System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (UN-SWAP) in 2012, updated in 2024 to version 3.0. This tool sets performance indicators for UN entities and monitors progress

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<sup>27</sup>"Wikipedia, March 6, 2025, ABANTU for Development," Wikipedia, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ABANTU\\_for\\_Development?utm](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ABANTU_for_Development?utm).

<sup>28</sup>AWID, n.d., "Who We Are & What We Do," AWID, <https://www.awid.org/who-we-are>.

<sup>29</sup>CARE, n.d. "CARE International Gender Equality and Inclusion Policy," CARE, <https://www.careinternational.org/content/uploads/2022/07/CARE-International-Gender-Equality-and-Inclusion-Policy-1-July-2022.pdf>.

<sup>30</sup>Plan International, n.d., "Advancing Children's Rights and Equality for Girls – Our

Global Approach to Programme and Influence," Plan International, <https://plan-international.org/uploads/2021/11/global-approach-final-io-eng-jun18.pdf>.

<sup>31</sup>Save the Children's Resource Centre, 2023 "Gender Equality Annual Report 2023: Towards a Gender Just Future," Save the Children's Resource Centre, <https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/document/gender-equality-annual-report-2023-towards-a-gender-just-future>.

<sup>32</sup>Solidarity for African Women's Rights (SOAWR), Soawr, n.d., <https://www.soawr.org/>.



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on mainstreaming gender.<sup>33</sup> Also, the Secretary-General submits annual reports to ECOSOC evaluating how well UN agencies are implementing gender mainstreaming.<sup>34</sup> It allows the UN to track which agencies are meeting commitments and which need improvement.

**Set Global Standards and Mandates:** The UN General Assembly and ECOSOC (Economic and Social Council) regularly pass resolutions that call for gender equality and gender mainstreaming across all UN bodies. The UNGA is the main deliberative body where all 193 member states participate. It regularly adopts resolutions on gender equality, including the annual resolution on the advancement of women. Although these resolutions are not legally binding, they set global norms and political commitments. For instance, in 2025, the UNGA adopted a political declaration in which all member states reaffirmed their commitment to accelerate progress on gender equality. These resolutions provide political guidance and set expectations for member states and agencies.<sup>35</sup>

**The Security Council:** The Council has integrated gender perspectives mainly through the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda. Resolution 1325 (2000) was groundbreaking, recognizing the importance of women in peacebuilding and calling for their protection in conflict zones.<sup>36</sup>

Since then, more than 10 follow-up resolutions have been adopted, reinforcing commitments to include women in peace processes and protect them from sexual violence in conflict (UN Women). For example: Resolution 1820 (2008)—recognized sexual violence as a tactic of war and a threat to international peace and security. Resolution 1888 (2009)—established the role of the Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict. Resolution 2242 (2015)—called for better integration of gender perspectives in counterterrorism and peace operations.<sup>37</sup>

While the Council cannot directly enforce gender equality in all UN activities, it has elevated women's roles in international peace and security.

**The Secretary-General:** The UN Secretary-General (SG) plays a key leadership role. Current SG António Guterres has described gender equality as “a question of power” and made gender parity a top priority. Under his leadership, the UN has achieved gender parity among senior management positions, fulfilling a pledge made in his 2017 Gender Parity Strategy. The SG also launched the Gender Equality Acceleration Plan (GEAP) in 2024, which aims to unify efforts across the system and set ambitious goals for the next decade.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>33</sup> UN Women, n.d. “UN-SWAP,” UN SYSTEM COORDINATION, n.d.,

<sup>34</sup> United Nations, n.d., “Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective into All Policies and Programmes in the United Nations System :,” United Nations, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4050356?v=pdf>.

<sup>35</sup> Edith M. Lederer, 2025, “Confronting Backlash against Women’s Rights, 193 Nations Commit to Speed Action on Gender Equality,” AP News, March 10, 2025, <https://apnews.com/article/un-women-gender-equality-backlash-beijing-platform-2e4c0c31cb1e032b7dbd56c943d8bd0b>; United Nations, 2024, “Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective into All Policies and Programmes in the United

Nations System :,” United Nations, 2024, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4050356?v=pdf>.

<sup>36</sup> United Nations, n.d., “Resolution 1325 (2000) ,” United Nations, October 31, 2000, [https://docs.un.org/en/S/RES/1325\(2000\)](https://docs.un.org/en/S/RES/1325(2000)).

<sup>37</sup> United Nations ,n.d., “United Nations Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security | She Stands for Peace,” United Nations, <https://www.un.org/shestandsforpeace/content/united-nations-security-council-resolutions-women-peace-and-security>.

<sup>38</sup> United Nations, n.d., “United for Gender Parity” United Nations, <https://www.un.org/gender/>; United Nations, n.d., “Gender Equality Acceleration Plan,”

**UN Agencies and Programs:** Specialized agencies integrate gender perspectives into their work. UN Women coordinates system-wide mainstreaming efforts and provides technical guidance. The UN Development Programme (UNDP) embeds gender equality in governance and economic programs, UNICEF promotes girls' rights in education and health, FAO advances rural women's empowerment, and UNEP addresses gender in environmental policies. Collectively, these agencies ensure gender mainstreaming across multiple fields, from humanitarian aid to sustainable development.<sup>39</sup>

## Landmark UN Resolutions

**General Assembly (GA):** The General Assembly has consistently affirmed gender equality as a core UN value. Key resolutions include:

- A/RES/70/1 (2015): Adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with SDG 5 committing to gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.

- A/RES/72/147 (2017): Called for intensified efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls globally.<sup>40</sup>
- Recent Statements: At the 2025 General Assembly, Member States reaffirmed gender equality as central to the Pact for the Future, emphasizing its role in peace, development, and human rights.<sup>41</sup>

**ECOSOC:** The Economic and Social Council has been instrumental in operationalizing gender mainstreaming:

- Agreed Conclusions 1997/2: Defined gender mainstreaming as a strategy for achieving gender equality across all UN policies.
- Resolution 2002/23: Called for system-wide implementation and monitoring of gender mainstreaming.
- Recent Resolution E/2024/3: Reaffirmed gender equality as essential to achieving the SDGs and urged stronger coordination across UN bodies.<sup>42</sup>

**Security Council (SC):** The Security Council's Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda is anchored in:

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United Nations, <https://www.un.org/en/gender-equality-acceleration-plan>.

<sup>39</sup> UNEP, n.d., "Equipping Women for Success: How UNEP's Gender Mainstreaming Initiatives Are Bridging the Gender Divide," UNEP, <https://www.unep.org/gef/news-and-stories/story/equipping-women-success-how-uneps-gender-mainstreaming-initiatives-are>; UN Women, n.d., "Gender Mainstreaming," UN Women, <https://www.unwomen.org/en/how-we-work/un-system-coordination/gender-mainstreaming>; UNICEF, n.d., "Gender Equality," UNICEF, <https://www.unicef.org/gender-equality>; UNEP, n.d., "Equipping Women for Success: How UNEP's Gender Mainstreaming Initiatives Are Bridging the Gender Divide," UNEP, <https://www.unep.org/gef/news-and-stories/story/equipping-women-success-how-uneps-gender-mainstreaming-initiatives-are>.

<sup>40</sup>United Nations, n.d. "UN General Assembly Resolutions Tables," United Nations, n.d.,

<https://research.un.org/en/docs/ga/quick/regular/79>.

<sup>41</sup> Ana Carmo, 2025, "Gender Equality: UN Women Calls for Political Will and Accelerated Global Action | UN News," United Nations, September 15, 2025, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/09/1165849>.

<sup>42</sup>ECOSOC, n.d. "ECOSOC Resolution 2001/31 Science and Technology for Development," ECOSOC, n.d., <https://ecosoc.un.org/sites/default/files/documents/2023/resolution-2001-31.pdf>; United Nations, n.d., "Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective into All Policies and Programmes in the United Nations System," United Nations., <https://digitalibrary.un.org/record/4050356?v=pdf>.

- Resolution 1325 (2000): Recognized the unique impact of conflict on women and called for their participation in peace processes. Follow-up resolutions include:
- Resolution 1820 (2008): Addressed sexual violence as a tactic of war.
- Resolution 2242 (2015): Linked WPS to counterterrorism and humanitarian response.
- Resolution 2493 (2019): Reaffirmed commitments and urged full implementation.<sup>43</sup>

recommend and support, but national governments have the final say. This means progress often depends on political will.<sup>45</sup>

**Ensure Uniform Implementation Across Agencies:** Despite frameworks like UN-SWAP, not all UN bodies meet the same standards. Some agencies lack capacity, leadership, or commitment, leading to uneven progress.

**Guarantee Funding for Gender Programs:** While the UN can advocate for gender budgeting, it relies on voluntary contributions from member states. Many gender-focused initiatives remain underfunded, limiting their reach and impact.

## What the UN Cannot Do

**Act Without Member State Support:** The UN is a multilateral body; it needs consensus to act. If powerful member states oppose gender-related language or funding, initiatives can stall or be watered down.<sup>44</sup>

**Enforce Gender Policies on Member States:** The UN operates on the principle of state sovereignty. While the UNGA can adopt resolutions and the CSW can agree on declarations, these are not legally binding. The UN cannot force a member state to adopt specific gender laws or policies; implementation depends entirely on national governments. It can

**Intervene Directly in Domestic Affairs:** The Security Council can act in cases of international peace and security, but the UN generally cannot intervene directly in how countries design social protection, labor, or family policies. Its role is limited to offering guidance, technical support, and monitoring progress.<sup>46</sup>

**Override Cultural or Political Resistance:** Some member states resist gender mainstreaming due to cultural, religious, or political beliefs. The UN cannot override such domestic objections. This often results in watered-down resolutions or language compromises in negotiations. The UN must navigate these sensitivities carefully, which can lead to compromises in resolutions or programming.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>43</sup> United Nations, n.d. “Security Council Resolutions,” United Nations, n.d., <https://peacemaker.un.org/en/thematic-areas/women-peace-security/normative-frameworks/security-council-resolutions>.

<sup>44</sup> United Nations, n.d., “Chapter I: Purposes and Principles (Articles 1-2),” United Nations, <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/chapter-1>: Saskia Brechenmacher, 2025, “The New Global Struggle over Gender, Rights, and Family Values | Carnegie Endowment for International Peace,” Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, June 5, 2025,

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<sup>45</sup> United Nations, n.d., “Chapter I: Purposes and Principles (Articles 1-2),” United Nations, <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/chapter-1>.

<sup>46</sup> United Nations, n.d., “Mainstreaming the Gender Perspective into All Policies and Programmes in the UN System,” United Nations., <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/followup/main.htm?utm>.

<sup>47</sup> UN Women, n.d., “Gender Mainstreaming,” UN Women, <https://www.unwomen.org/en/how-we->



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## Prevent Backlash Against Women's Rights:

While the UN can call attention to regressions, it cannot prevent member states from cutting back on women's rights protections. In 2024, UN Women reported that nearly one in four governments rolled back gender equality measures, a development the UN could condemn but not directly reverse.<sup>48</sup>

## Country and Bloc Positions

**African Union (AU):** The African Union (AU) promotes gender equality among its 55 Member States through frameworks like Agenda 2063 and the African Union Gender Strategy 2018–2028, which call for integrating gender into governance, peacebuilding, and development across its member states. Like the Arab League, the African Union leaves actual policy-making up to each of its Member States.

Some African countries, including Ghana, support gender equality and empowerment. Ghana passed the Affirmative Action Gender Bill 2024 to increase women's participation in

governance (30 percent target by 2030), showing member states can make strong domestic policy moves that align with UN gender mainstreaming goals.<sup>49</sup>

The AU launched initiatives such as the African Women's Decade (2020–2030) to advance women's leadership and economic empowerment.<sup>50</sup> While countries like Rwanda and Ethiopia show strong progress, implementation remains uneven due to conflict, cultural resistance, and limited resources. The AU collaborates with UN Women to align regional efforts with global standards, reinforcing its influence in shaping UN debates and resolutions.<sup>51</sup>

**Arab League:** Many, but not all, of the 22 Arab League Member States support gender equality in education and health but are cautious about UN language on reproductive rights and LGBTQ+ inclusion. Cultural and religious norms shape their positions, often leading to reservations in negotiations.<sup>52</sup> Because gender issues can be divisive among its Member States, the Arab League often avoid the issue and leaves policy-making up to each of its Member States.

**China:** China supports gender equality in principle and has made commitments under the

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[work/un-system-coordination/gender-mainstreaming](https://www.un.org/en/work/un-system-coordination/gender-mainstreaming): United Nations, 2024, "Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective into All Policies and Programmes in the United Nations System :," United Nations, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4050356?v=pdf>.

<sup>48</sup>UN Women, 2025, "One in Four Countries Report Backlash on Women's Rights in 2024," UN Women, March 6, 2025, <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news-stories/press-release/2025/03/one-in-four-countries-report-backlash-on-womens-rights-in-2024?utm>.

<sup>49</sup>Reuters, n.d. "Ghana Parliament Passes Law to Quicken Women's Empowerment | Reuters," Reuters, <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/ghana-parliament-passes-law-quicken-womens-empowerment-2024-07-30/>.

<sup>50</sup>African Union, n.d., "AU Strategy for Gender Equality & Women's Empowerment," African Union, n.d., <https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/36195->

[doc-52569\\_au\\_strategy\\_eng\\_high.pdf](https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/36195-doc-52569_au_strategy_eng_high.pdf): African Union, 2021, "Gender Equality & Development," African Union, January 29, 2021,

<https://au.int/en/gender-equality-development>.

<sup>51</sup>African Union, 2022, "African Union and UN Women Renew Commitment to Advance Gender Equality in Africa," African Union, November 25, 2022,

<https://au.int/en/pressreleases/20221125/african-union-and-un-women-renew-commitment-advance-gender-equality-africa>.

<sup>52</sup>UN Women, n.d., "Arab States," UN Women, <https://arabstates.unwomen.org/en>; b UNDP, 2025, "Regional Gender Equality Strategy for the Arab States 2024-2026," UNDP, January 22, 2025,

<https://www.undp.org/arab-states/publications/regional-gender-equality-strategy-arab-states-2024-2026>.



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Beijing Platform for Action, which it hosted in 1995. Domestically, it promotes women's participation in development and poverty reduction. However, China tends to resist gender-related language in UN resolutions that touch on sexual and reproductive health or LGBTQ+ rights, citing national sovereignty and cultural values.<sup>53</sup>

China consistently supports goals established by the UN, and supports international institutions.<sup>54</sup> China also stresses the UN as a tool for increasing its influence over global values, a key element in its campaign to make the world more like China itself.

China's UN policy is not without concerns. It fears the UN will be used to create precedents for international action in the domestic affairs of Member States, precedents that could be used against China. As Chinese UN diplomats at the UN said in another context, 'China's continuing and vehement insistence on respect for other nations' sovereignty is not only a cornerstone of its foreign policy but a foundational ethos for the government of a nation that has traditionally struggled to maintain control at its edges — from Xinjiang and Tibet in the far west to Hong Kong and Taiwan off its east coast.'<sup>55</sup>

**European Union:** The EU is one of the strongest global advocates for gender mainstreaming. It funds UN Women, promotes gender budgeting, and integrates gender into its climate, development, and humanitarian policies. The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) supports gender-sensitive evaluation across EU institutions.<sup>56</sup>

Broad support for gender mainstreaming at the UN is expected from the European Union, particularly northern and western member states such as Sweden, Germany, France, and the Netherlands, which consistently champion gender equality in multilateral forums.<sup>57</sup> However, Hungary and Poland have voiced strong opposition to progressive gender language, especially around LGBTQI rights and intersectionality, citing sovereignty and legal interpretation concerns. Italy has shown mixed engagement, supporting female entrepreneurship and gender-sensitive reforms domestically while remaining cautious on transnational gender norms.<sup>58</sup>

For example, France is a vocal advocate for gender-responsive budgeting through its participation in the Commission on the Status of Women, where it has emphasized the need for transformative care-led strategies and inclusive financial frameworks.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>53</sup> Ibid: Wikipedia, 2025, "Beijing Declaration," Wikipedia, September 15, 2025,

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beijing\\_Declaration](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beijing_Declaration).

<sup>54</sup> Wen Sheng, 'China leads global efforts to realize UN sustainable development goals for 2030', *Global Times*, 27 June 2023,

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202306/1293251.shtml>

<sup>55</sup> Ted Anthony, 'China, at UN, warns against 'expansion of the battlefield' in the Ukraine war', *Associated Press*, 28 September 2024,

<https://apnews.com/article/china-united-nations-general-assembly-51ea58a6cd821656382f06ad0b3b93bc>

<sup>56</sup> European Institute for Gender Equality, n.d., "Gender Mainstreaming," European Institute for Gender Equality, <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming>; UN Women, 2022, "EU-Un Women

Hand-in-Hand for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment," UN Women, May 20, 2022,

<https://www.unwomen.org/en/news-stories/news/2022/05/eu-un-women-hand-in-hand-for-gender-equality-and-womens-empowerment>.

<sup>57</sup> European Commission, n.d., "Gender Equality Mainstreaming," European Commission, n.d., [https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/eu-budget/performance-and-reporting/horizontal-priorities/gender-equality-mainstreaming\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/eu-budget/performance-and-reporting/horizontal-priorities/gender-equality-mainstreaming_en).

<sup>58</sup> Hans von der Burchard, 2020 "EU's Foreign Policy Gender Plan Faces Resistance from Poland and Hungary," *POLITICO*, November 25, 2020, <https://www.politico.eu/article/eus-gender-equality-push-for-external-relations-faces-trouble-from-the-inside/>.

<sup>59</sup> United Nations, March 18, 2024, "Gender-Responsive Budgeting, Greater Investments in Social Services Vital for Empowering Women, Speakers

The EU is frequently joined by like-minded democracies, including Australia, Canada, and Japan, as well as major advocacy-oriented governments such as Brazil, Mexico, and South Africa, all of which rank highly on global gender equality indices and actively promote gender-sensitive policies in UN negotiations.<sup>60</sup> These countries work together strongly to include gender issues in peacebuilding, development, and humanitarian aid, but differences among them and changing political situations can make it hard to agree on specific wording or how to carry out these ideas.

For example, Global Affairs Canada (the Canadian foreign ministry) announced in March 2025 a contribution of \$193.45 million toward 20 projects advancing gender equality globally. This includes support for the Equality Fund, the Women's Voice and Leadership Program, and the Alliance for Feminist Movements, which are aligned with UN Women's goals.<sup>61</sup> Similarly, Mexico co-hosted the Generation Equality Forum and continues to push for inclusive policies. During the Forum, Mexico launched the Group of Friends for Gender

Equality, a coalition of 20 member states committed to promoting gender equality in multilateral forums.<sup>62</sup>

**Non-Aligned Movement (NAM):** The 120-member voting bloc, mostly of post-colonial states in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East, plays a key role shaping General Assembly outcomes. While many NAM countries support gender equality in development and education, the bloc is divided on issues like reproductive rights and LGBTQ+ inclusion. This often leads to cautious or compromised language in UN resolutions.<sup>63</sup>

**Nordic States (Finland, Denmark, Iceland, Norway and Sweden):** These countries continue to champion feminist foreign policies, integrating gender into diplomacy, aid, and peacebuilding. Among the top performers in gender equality indices are strong financial and normative support for UN agencies focused on gender (for example, UNFPA and UN Women). They help set high benchmarks and provide

Stress, as Commission on Women Continues Session | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases," United Nations, ,

<https://press.un.org/en/2024/wom2236.doc.htm>.

<sup>60</sup>World Population Review, "Gender Equality by Country 2025," World Population Review, n.d.,

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<sup>61</sup>Global Affairs Canada, March 8, 2025 "Canada Announces International Assistance to Continue to Advance Gender Equality Globally," Canada.ca,

<https://www.canada.ca/en/global-affairs/news/2025/03/canada-announces-international-assistance-to-continue-to-advance-gender-equality-globally.html>.

<sup>62</sup>Gobierno de Mexico, March 31, 2021, "Activism and Commitments to Accelerate Gender Equality Mark the Generation Equality Forum in Mexico City," Gobierno de Mexico ,

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<sup>63</sup>European Institute for Gender Equality, n.d.,

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UN Women, 2022, "LGBTIQ+ Equality and Rights: Internal Resource Guide," UN Women, May 2022,

<https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2023-07/lgbtiq-equality-and-rights-internal-resource-guide-en.pdf>: Kate Walton, n.d., "Opposition to Gender Equality around the World Is Connected, Well

Funded and Spreading. Here's What You Need to Know about the Anti-Gender Movement," CNN,

<https://www.cnn.com/interactive/asequals/anti-gender-equality-threat-explained-as-equals-intl-cmd>:

funding and technical support for gender mainstreaming.<sup>64</sup>

There are differences among the Nordics. The current government of Sweden, led by the Moderate Party, for example, rejects the Feminist Foreign Policy of its predecessor. But it continues to support a general commitment to gender equality.

**Russian Federation:** Russia supports traditional gender roles and often opposes progressive gender language in UN resolutions. It has criticized what it calls “gender ideology” and frequently pushes back against references to sexual orientation and gender identity. Russia’s position influences negotiations in the Security Council and General Assembly.<sup>65</sup>

**United States:** The United States was a major funder of UN Women and supported gender equality in peacebuilding, humanitarian aid and education. Under the current administration, U.S. engagement with gender mainstreaming is likely to be selective and politically constrained. The U.S. may continue to support some policies related to women’s economic empowerment, anti-trafficking efforts, and leadership development, especially when framed in terms of its effort to fight enemy governments, such as Cuba, Iran, Nicaragua or Venezuela. It opposes

language perceived as ideologically progressive or ‘woke’. This includes references to sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI), reproductive rights, intersectionality, and systemic discrimination.<sup>66</sup>

Since becoming President for a second term on 21 January 2025, President Donald Trump reversed American policy on domestic and foreign policy aspects of gender policy. The United States is silent or actively opposed to most consideration of gender-specific issues, all under the framework of its anti-Woke policies. As a general rule, if Presidents Obama or Biden supported something, the Trump administration will almost certainly oppose it.

Furthermore, under the current administration, U.S. engagement with gender mainstreaming is increasingly selective and politically constrained. At the 2025 Commission on the Status of Women (CSW69), the U.S. delegation refused to endorse the final declaration, rejected references to CEDAW, and dismissed gender quotas and climate policies as “globalist overreach.” The administration has consistently opposed references to sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI), intersectionality, and systemic discrimination, framing them as “gender ideology” and incompatible with national values.<sup>67</sup>

<sup>64</sup> UN Women, n.d., “UN WOMEN’S 2024 GLOBAL REACH AND COUNTRY HIGHLIGHTS Powering Change for All Women and Girls,” UN Women, <https://open.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2025-09/Brief-UN-Women-reach-2024-Global-en.pdf>; Olivia Nater, May 8, 2025, 2025, “What Are the Top Countries for Gender Equality?,” Population Connection, <https://populationconnection.org/blog/what-are-the-top-countries-for-gender-equality/?utm>.

<sup>65</sup> Agence France-Presse, 2024, “Russia and Allies Clash over Women’s Rights and Gender Identity Terms at Un,” Firstpost, July 13, 2024, <https://www.firstpost.com/world/russia-and-allies-clash-over-womens-rights-and-gender-identity-terms-at-un-13792724.html>.

<sup>66</sup> U.S. Department of State, n.d., “Department of State Implementation Plan for the U.S. Strategy and National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security” U.S. Department of State, <https://www.state.gov/reports/department-of-state-implementation-plan-for-the-u-s-strategy-and-national-action-plan-on-women-peace-and-security/>; US Department of State, “n.d., United States Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence Globally 2022U,” U.S. Department of State, <https://2021-2025.state.gov/reports/united-states-strategy-to-prevent-and-respond-to-gender-based-violence-globally-2022/>.

<sup>67</sup> Ditte Bjerregaard, Center for Violence Prevention, 2025 “How the U.S. Abandoned Women’s Rights at the UN-and What It Means for Global Gender Equality,” WOMEN AGAINST VIOLENCE



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In February 2025, the United States terminated USD 377 million in grants to UNFPA, affecting maternal health and gender-based violence programs in crisis zones. Diplomatically, U.S. representatives have objected to terms like “equal pay for work of equal value” and “gender-responsive budgeting,” preferring language that emphasizes economic empowerment and national security.

It can be anticipated that the U.S. will resist resolutions that mandate gender mainstreaming across UN agencies or link gender equality to broader social justice frameworks. The administration may align with other conservative governments, such as Russia or Hungary to promote sovereignty-based alternatives that reject universal gender norms.<sup>68</sup>

## Some Possible Proposals for Action

There is a wide range of proposals ECOSOC Member States might consider as they work to address the global challenges of gender. Each Member State delegation is free to develop their own proposals.

When evaluating any proposal for action, delegations should consider its effectiveness in response to the problem, financial costs and sources of funding, the impact of the proposal on

national sovereignty and other national political goals. In other words, how well will it work, how much does it cost, and how does it affect other national goals?

Here are few possibilities to be considered:

### Mainstreaming UN Systems through Permanent Gender Security Council

**Subcommittee:** The UN could create a formal body within the Security Council to monitor gender impacts in conflict zones, peacekeeping missions, and sanctions regimes. This would institutionalize gender-sensitive decision-making in global security.

### Increase Funding for Gender Equality

**Programs by 25 percent:** The UN should call on donor countries to boost contributions to UN Women and gender-focused initiatives, especially in humanitarian, climate, and education sectors. This would help close the USD 420 billion annual funding gap.

But where to find the money? The UN budget declining. The United States refuses to fund its previous 20 percent share of the overall UN budget. Virtually all programs face cuts. A new funding source will be essential.

### Introduce a Sovereignty-Based Counter-Resolution on Gender Programming:

The UN should allow Member States to opt out of gender mainstreaming mandates and reject language

EUROPE, April 8, 2025, <https://wave-network.org/how-the-u-s-abandoned-womens-rights-at-the-un-and-what-it-means-for-global-gender-equality/>; Lisa Song, “The Trump Administration Is Using the UN to Push Its Anti-Trans Agenda Globally,” Truthout, August 5, 2025, <https://truthout.org/articles/the-trump-administration-is-using-the-un-to-push-its-anti-trans-agenda-globally/>.

<sup>68</sup>Saskia Brechenmacher, 2025 “Trump’s ‘Gender Ideology’ Attacks Are Following a Global Movement,” Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, February 14, 2025,

<https://carnegieendowment.org/emissary/2025/02/trump-gender-ideology-global-trend-women-lgbtq-rights?lang=en>; United Nations, 2025 “US Funding Cuts Confirmed, Ending Lifesaving Support for Women and Girls | UN News,” United Nations, February 27, 2025, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/02/1160631>; Damilola Banjo, 2025 “U.S. Plays Spoiler at Annual Gathering on Women’s Rights,” Ms. Magazine, March 19, 2025, <https://msmagazine.com/2025/03/19/us-opposition-un-womens-rights-progress/>.

referencing sexual orientation, gender identity, intersectionality, or reproductive autonomy. A General Assembly resolution co-sponsored by the United States and the Russian Federation could affirm national sovereignty and cultural integrity in UN programming.

**Mandate Gender Parity in All Senior UN Appointments by 2030:** The UN should require that all senior UN positions (for example, Under-Secretaries-General, Special Envoys) achieve gender parity by 2030, regardless of member state nominations. This would challenge entrenched power structures and accelerate leadership reform.

**Make Gender Mainstreaming Legally Binding for All UN Agencies:** Propose a General Assembly resolution for every UN entity to meet gender performance benchmarks or face budget penalties. This would elevate gender equality to a compliance issue, not just a policy goal.

**Strengthen Gender Data Collection in Crisis Zone:** The UN should support UNHCR, OCHA, and UNDP in gathering gender-disaggregated data during emergencies to improve response planning and resource allocation. This is a practical step that enhances effectiveness without requiring major political shifts.

## Conclusion

Mainstreaming a gender perspective is not just a technical goal; it is a moral and strategic necessity. The United Nations was founded on the principles of equality and human dignity, and those principles cannot be fulfilled if half the world's population is left out of decision-making, policy design, or emergency response.



While the UN has made important progress, from launching UN Women to adopting gender-sensitive frameworks like UN-SWAP, serious gaps remain. Data is missing. Funding is limited. And political resistance continues to slow down change. But the tools for transformation already exist. What is needed now is leadership, accountability, and bold ideas from the next generation, including delegates at this conference like you.

Whether your Member State is a donor, a developing state, or part of a regional bloc, you have a role to play. You can push for stronger gender language in resolutions, demand better data collection, and support inclusive leadership across the UN system. You can also challenge outdated norms and propose new ways to make gender equality not just a goal but a reality. Or you might demand that each Member State alone have authority on the issue.

The future of the UN depends on its ability to reflect the world it serves. For many member States, that means making gender equality part of everything the UN does, not just some things. Other Member States bring a different perspective to the issues. As you prepare your position papers and draft resolutions, for ODUMUNC remember mainstreaming gender is not about adding one more issue to the agenda. It is about changing how the agenda is built.



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