

UNDP Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2021

I. The challenge

Gender equality is a fundamental human right and a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world. However, gender inequality remains one of the most pervasive forms of discrimination in all development settings. While gender inequalities can affect anyone, impeding global progress towards achieving sustainable development, it is women who face the most discrimination.

Global gender gaps:



II. The solution

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development envisions a world *“of universal respect for human rights and human dignity”* in which *“every woman and girl enjoys full gender equality and all legal, social and economic barriers to their empowerment have been removed.”*

Gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls are central to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and all 17 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Gender equality is reflected in 45 targets and 54 gender-specific indicators of the SDGs. Achieving these targets and closing the gender gaps will therefore create a multiplier effect across all of the SDGs and accelerate their achievement.

With the largest operational platform within the United Nations system, working on the ground in some 170 countries and territories, UNDP’s work and expertise are central to achieving the SDGs. This unique position has prompted UNDP to adopt the Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2021, which commits the organization to intensify its efforts to mainstream gender equality across all of its areas of work.



GENDER EQUALITY IS REFLECTED IN 45 TARGETS AND 54 GENDER-SPECIFIC INDICATORS OF THE SDGs

III. UNDP’s role

UNDP helps countries deliver on the SDGs by working on four priority areas:



1. Removing structural barriers to women’s economic empowerment, including unpaid work

UNDP’s work focuses on approaches that transform legal, policy and social norms to create a sustainable impact on women’s economic empowerment. This requires investing more in gender-responsive infrastructure, implementing policies that support equal redistribution of unpaid care and domestic work, equal access to assets and land and other such approaches. For example, the **Inclusive and Equitable Local Development Programme (IELD)** is a joint UNDP, United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) and UN Women programme that addresses the structural impediments women face when entering the labour market. The programme identifies and designs a local pipeline of investable projects, women-led enterprises and gender-responsive businesses that are large enough to have a transformative impact on the livelihoods of women. IELD then unlocks domestic public and private capital and mitigates risk through the provision of seed capital, grants, loans and collateral guarantees.



2. Preventing and responding to gender-based violence

UNDP works closely with governments and national and local institutions to address gender-based violence (GBV), one of the major impediments to both gender equality and sustainable development. In particular, UNDP supports efforts to ensure justice for survivors of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in crises and non-crisis contexts by improving the skills and knowledge of police officers, judges, prosecutors, court administrators and military and religious leaders. For example, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, UNDP, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) worked together on a programme to prevent SGBV that led to an 88 percent decrease in SGBV cases and improved women's access to justice by 33 percent. In addition, UNDP's programme "**Ending Gender-Based Violence and Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals**" tests and implements approaches to prevent and effectively eliminate GBV and generate lasting, transformational change.



3. Promoting women's participation and leadership in all forms of decision-making

UNDP's work focuses on increasing women's participation and leadership in a broad range of institutions, including parliaments, political parties, public administration, judiciary and the private sector. For example, in Montenegro UNDP's efforts to empower women in political parties resulted in the establishment of the cross-party Women's Political Network, which leads advocacy on women's political participation and contributed to an increase in the representation of women in the national Parliament from 17 to 24 percent. In addition to efforts to increase the number of women candidates, UNDP also works to address structural barriers to women's leadership through support of gender equality laws and quotas and aims to strengthen women's empowerment and leadership in the workplace through the **Gender Equality Seal for Private and Public Enterprises**.



4. Strengthening gender-responsive strategies in crisis (conflict and disaster) prevention, preparedness and recovery

UNDP works to improve integration of gender equality issues in conflict prevention, disaster preparedness and crises response, and advance the women's peace and security agenda. For example, in Colombia UNDP has worked with national partners to help survivors of sexual violence rebuild their lives. In addition, the regional programme **SEESAC (South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearing House for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons)** has advanced gender equality in security sector reforms in the Western Balkans. It established the Women Police Officers Network in South Eastern Europe, a regional advocacy mechanism that brings together high-ranking women police officers, and also helped institutionalize Ministry of Defense gender focal points, who advance policy reforms to improve the recruitment and retention of women in the armed forces and make the institutions more responsive towards gender issues.

UNDP also invests in its own organizational transformation

- UNDP **promotes leadership for gender equality** among senior managers by ensuring gender-balanced representation in high-level meetings and UNDP-organized conferences and events and by promoting gender equality and women's empowerment through public speeches and statements.
- UNDP implements innovative solutions such as the **Gender Equality Seal** to incentivize its units to integrate gender equality into all aspects of their development work.
- UNDP is seeking to **progressively increase programming that addresses gender equality issues** through the specific allocation of programmatic resources to gender equality and the empowerment of women to meet UN-System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women.
- UNDP is committed to **creating inclusive, diverse and safe working environments**:
 - With the **Gender Parity Strategy 2018-2021**, UNDP aims to reach gender parity across all levels of the organization.
 - UNDP **does not tolerate sexual exploitation and abuse or harassment and abuse of authority**. The organization has strengthened accountability and related policy measures and all offices are implementing tailored solutions to put an end to such practices.

GENDER EQUALITY SEAL



This is a certification programme and learning platform

that supports UNDP offices and units to address gaps, document and share innovation and knowledge and advance organizational change for gender equality. Since 2011, more than 50 country offices have been awarded a bronze, silver or gold certification.

KEY PARTNERS

United Nations: UNDP works closely across the United Nations system to advance gender equality and achieve sustainable development, engaging in interagency task forces and UN System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women.

Civil society: UNDP works in close partnership with civil society organizations to create space and opportunities for women's organizations and networks at large to engage effectively around achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Private sector: UNDP is working with UN partners to unlock private capital to expand women's access to financial services, strengthen women's participation and leadership in businesses and to build inclusive workspaces.

Academia, think tanks and media: UNDP works with these key partners to advocate for and support evidence-based research on gender equality and its linkage with the achievement of the SDGs.