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Accelerating Progress for Women and Girls

GIWPS Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security

The ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION

Acknowledgements

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This report was developed in conjunction with a high-level group of global women leaders and Generation Equality leaders, a cohort of eight women leaders, activists, and policymakers who brought their perspectives to this report.

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Hillary Rodham Clinton, Former United States Secretary of State

Patricia Espinosa, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

Drew Faust, Former President of Harvard University

Julia Gillard, Former Prime Minister of Australia

Dalia Grybauskaitė, Former President of Lithuania

Natalia Kanem, Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund

Susana Malcorra, Former Foreign Minister of Argentina

Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director of UN Women

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Foreword

We live at a watershed moment for women. Seldom has the world so urgently needed gender equality. It is up to us to demand it.

In 2020, a global health pandemic and faltering economy have exacted an especially cruel toll on women. And yet, women on every continent are rising to the challenge of COVID-19. From frontline workers, caregivers, and humanitarians risking their own lives, to heads of state safeguarding the lives of others, women are steering us through this crisis. And women deserve equality and justice in return, once and for all.

Whether the pandemic, mass unemployment, or climate change, the burdens of today's world weigh disproportionately on women, widening the gender gap in low wages, poor health outcomes, barriers to education, and surges in domestic violence, displacement and conflict.

Twenty-five years ago, representatives from 189 countries and tens of thousands of women activists converged in Beijing to demand gender equity and justice. That, too, was a watershed moment. Not only for the scope of the gathering, or the force of its message that "human rights are women's rights," but for its Platform for Action, the most comprehensive blueprint for women's equality in history. Action was demanded, and action was taken—leading to advances in education, health care, political representation, and legal remedies to discrimination.

Yet today, work remains to be done. Institutional and structural sexism continue to deprive women—especially women of color—of fair wages, or wages at all, for their contributions to their economies. In some countries, there is not even a word for rape. In most, a culture of impunity thrives, allowing the subjugation, humiliation, and silencing of women who have been sexually harassed or assaulted in their homes and workplaces. Virtually everywhere, antiquated norms calcify gender biases, perpetuating workplace discrimination, economic dependency, obstacles to political power and educational opportunity, and lethargy in writing and enforcing laws protecting women's rights.

When women step up to demand progress, raising their voices on and offline, they are too often met with derision and blame, and even violence. This worrisome pattern of scapegoating is only getting worse in a climate of economic insecurity, political alienation, and fear of change. Let's be clear: A rise in gender activism has coincided with a rise of authoritarian leaders—from the United States to the Philippines to Russia to Brazil and beyond—who cling to a rigid ideology of male privilege and supremacy that denies women their voices and their value. This cultural backlash, meant to stifle and suppress the potential of half the world's population, is thwarting the progress we've made, and threatens progress still to come.

So, we must resist and persist. And insist.

We can wait no longer.

Even in the current crucible of global crises and gender discrimination, there is reason for hope. Beginning in 2017, a groundswell of protest on behalf of women's rights led millions of people to march in solidarity through city streets and town squares around the world. At the same time, courageous women on every continent began sharing their own stories of sexual and gender-based exploitation. Mobilizing new technologies, they were able to blend their voices into a global chorus that grew into a global movement. Just as the

worldwide marches and the energy of #MeToo have helped weave women's narratives into the larger tapestry of human history, we must seize this moment of peril and promise and write the next chapters of our story until we achieve full equality.

And we can.

What follows is a roadmap for the future that builds on the Beijing Platform for Action. Relying on the wisdom and experience of accomplished women from every sector, and the fresh insights and aspirations of young women leaders, the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security and The Rockefeller Foundation have compiled a groundbreaking report outlining gaps in women's progress since 1995 and strategic levers for change moving forward.

Beijing + 25: Accelerating Progress for Women and Girls offers a comprehensive framework for what a post-pandemic world must look like for women. It calls for resetting gender norms, bridging gaps between law and practice, countering backlash to gender equality, fostering democratic inclusion and accountability, and harnessing technology as a means to empower women and girls. It provides local, national, and global examples of policies and programs that work. And it showcases new, cutting-edge tools from mobile apps to climate justice designed to erase gender inequities that COVID-19 has so vividly, and irrefutably, exposed.

Finishing the unfinished business of the Beijing platform is an urgent strategic imperative that all world leaders, men and women alike, must embrace. Not with tired ideas and incremental steps, but with the boldness, passion, and resources needed to capitalize on the extraordinary events of this hour in ways that will transform our world for the better.

Our time is now. We must meet this moment.

Hillary Rodham Clinton
Former United States Secretary of State

Executive summary

In 1995, an unprecedented 17,000 participants and 30,000 activists streamed into Beijing and produced the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The declaration was grounded in a determination to "advance the goals of equality, development, and peace for all women everywhere in the interest of all humanity." Twenty-five years later, alongside the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), this progressive blueprint remains a powerful inspiration for advancing women's rights. In fact, it has gained credence as a crucial organizing framework for a post COVID-19 world.

The COVID-19 pandemic has transformed our lives, surfacing severe gender inequalities that many have been trying to address for years. Responding to the scope and severity of the pandemic is straining every system that influences all aspects of daily life—our public health infrastructure, economy, social and cultural dynamics, and politics. Yet COVID-19 also presents an unprecedented opportunity to rethink, reset, and build back better, particularly for women and girls. Indeed, the decision-making frameworks of the next 12 to 18 months will shape human interactions for the rest of this century and beyond. That creates a window for real systems change—and a responsibility to act now.

As we lean into the response to this crisis, we must bring a renewed sense of urgency to building a global community—with the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action at the center—in which everyone, especially women and girls, can be hopeful about the future. While the divisions and inequalities in our world may seem greater than ever, so is our ability to rise above them.

Since 1995, there have been important gains for women and girls—parity in education in many countries, far fewer deaths in childbirth, more women elected to parliament and leadership positions in government and business, and reduced discrimination under the law.

Yet major gaps persist on multiple fronts. Women's paid labor force participation has stagnated globally, and women still carry the heaviest burden of unpaid work at home. Every year, 13 percent of women experience sexual or physical violence inflicted by an intimate partner, with prevalence rising to 18 percent in fragile and conflict-affected countries.[1] Women remain largely excluded from decision-making—in governments, from the local to the highest levels; in peace negotiations; and in corporate leadership. Part I of the report provides an overview of these patterns, with attention to current regional differences in women's well-being and inclusion.

The COVID-19 pandemic risks rolling back women's modest gains and slowing or even reversing progress. Major threats to women's lives and livelihoods include the health risks faced by frontline workers, a majority of whom are women; rising rates of intimate partner violence; resistance to women's rights and to access to sexual and reproductive healthcare; growing injustice in the labor force; discriminatory laws and lack of

The COVID-19 pandemic serves as an unprecedented opportunity to rethink, reset, and build back better, particularly for women and girls.

legal identity; and repercussions for forcibly displaced women.

The good news is that innovative interventions are emerging from states and nonstate actors, including efforts to prevent and respond to intimate partner violence, address the disadvantages facing poor and marginalized women, and support the collective action of women and women's organizations. These efforts are moving to the fore amid the challenges of COVID-19. The SDGs, committed to by 193 governments in 2015, are at the heart of recovery and of what needs to be done, and they make clear that responding requires informed and inclusive action.

This report was developed in conjunction with a high-level group of global women leaders—listed on page iii—to reflect on continuing challenges and provide solutions for overcoming persistent obstacles to gender equality. This high-level group was joined by the Generation Equality leaders, a cohort of eight women leaders, activists, and policymakers who brought their perspectives to this report.[2] Their wisdom and experiences are reflected in these pages. Institutionally, the report represents a collaboration between the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security (GIWPS) and The Rockefeller Foundation.

Five strategic levers for change

Several levers and potential entry points, connected in important ways, have emerged as critical to accelerating and sustaining progress for women and girls on the ground. Part II highlights five key levers for progress and presents concrete examples of promising practice.

Lever 1. Resetting gender norms

Discriminatory gender norms have impeded progress toward the Beijing goals on multiple fronts.[3] Changing current gender norms has emerged as a global priority.[4] Some promising examples include:

- *Recognizing and redistributing unpaid care work.* Paid time off can be supported by programs like MenCare+, which has offered fatherhood preparation courses and information campaigns in Brazil, Indonesia, Rwanda, and South Africa to address fathers' reported feelings of being unprepared or ill-informed about caring for children.[5]
- *Leveraging media platforms.* The media can play a transformative role in advancing gender equality and addressing harmful norms by amplifying women's voices and representing women as experts and storytellers. The Population Media Council uses entertainment programming to positively shift norms through media. To create powerful, context-specific content, the council hires local writers and producers[6] whose programming has reached 500 million people across Africa, Asia, and the Americas.[7]
- *Boosting girls' life skills and aspirations.* Providing girls with training in soft skills and access to capacity-building programs helps develop confidence, overcome harmful internalized norms, and reduce the likelihood of child marriage.

Lever 2. Bridging gaps between law and practice

Progress on legislative reform has been extensive, but implementation often lags. Transforming policies into realities requires commitments at all levels, including:

- *Implementing government reforms to strengthen enforcement of gender equality protections.* A review of laws against domestic violence suggests that comprehensive approaches can pay off, as in Sweden, which coordinated a broad set of policies to implement its extensive legal framework for preventing violence against women.[8]
- *Engaging community leaders to improve sexual and reproductive health and reduce violence.* SASA! is a community-led intervention for catalyzing changes in norms and behaviors that perpetuate gender inequality, violence, and HIV vulnerability for women. Established in Uganda, SASA! is now reportedly used in 25 countries and more than 60 organizations in various contexts, including refugee camps, high-density urban communities, and faith-based institutions.[9]
- *Allocating adequate resources.* Investments in social protection, women's centers, and sexual and reproductive health are examples of necessary interventions but are often chronically underfunded.

Lever 3. Countering backlash to gender equality

Resistance to gender equality can come from many sides, typically from men (who benefit from the status quo), fundamentalist groups, and populist governments that demonize and misrepresent gender equality as a threat to "traditional values." Political violence against women activists, political leaders, and demonstrators has emerged as a prevalent form of backlash. Two broad strategies emerge to counter backlash:

- *Rallying collective action.* Global, national, and grassroots efforts to counter backlash include mass

demonstrations, social media campaigns, and other forms of collective action. Armenia's landmark 2013 legislation on Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities for Men and Women met powerful backlash fueled by ultranationalist groups, but women's groups successfully countered the opposition using social media as a megaphone.

- *Navigating resistance.* Resistance to gender equality can occur at all levels, from international organizations to the workplace. In Victoria, Australia, VicHealth[10] has outlined strategies to manage and counter backlash in conversations, including identifying allies, recognizing domination techniques, being prepared to listen, and considering framing strategies to debunk myths around gender equality.

Lever 4. Fostering democratic inclusion and accountability

Women play major roles as decision-makers and as monitors holding decision-makers accountable. Measures to increase the representation of women have boosted gender equality in elected bodies, advanced the inclusion of women's groups, promoted social movements at grassroots levels, and fostered action for peace, climate justice, and adaptation.

- *Changing attitudes about leadership.* The panchayat gender quotas in India have long shown that seeing is believing, as seeing women in local leadership roles positively changed attitudes toward women's leadership.[11]
- *Advancing peace and security through collective organization.* Where women have been excluded from formal political processes, women's movements have led to mass action campaigns in many cases. During the 2019 revolution in Sudan, women led demonstrations calling for justice and successfully campaigned for the revocation of former President Omar al-Bashir's Public Order law that regulated what women could wear, whom they spoke to, and what job they could hold.
- *Taking action for climate justice.* Women officials at the local level have been at the forefront of climate action and are mobilizing through networks like Women4Climate, created by 20 women mayors of the C40 Cities group.[12] Young and indigenous women have also led actions to protect the environment, as seen in the work of The Association for Indigenous Women and Peoples of Chad and the activities of young activist Greta Thunberg.[13]

Lever 5. Harnessing technology

Technological innovation holds promise for empowering women and girls on multiple fronts, in part because it enables evading or leap-frogging traditional constraints and structures. Technology can be a gateway to women's economic empowerment. This is especially the case for new digital technologies that were largely unavailable at the time of the Beijing Conference.

- *Amplifying women's voices.* Social media can act as a force multiplier in campaigns for gender equality by raising awareness at often unprecedented speed with unrivaled reach, giving a voice to women who have long been muted in public spaces. Inspiring a global movement, the #MeToo hashtag has been widely used in 85 countries and translated into many languages.
- *Enhancing physical security.* Apps and other online platforms can increase women's access to justice, expose areas of insecurity, and deter violence against women. SafeCity visually maps cases of sexual assault across major cities in Africa, Asia, Europe, and South America, aiming to both protect women from future violence and break the silence surrounding abuse.[14]
- *Advancing women's economic opportunities and entrepreneurship.* Technology is a gateway to new public spaces, markets, and information with major potential for boosting women's economic activity and participation. A GSMA survey across 11 developing countries—including Colombia, Jordan, and Kenya—found that nearly two in three women reported that mobile phones had given them new access to employment and business opportunities.[15]

The way forward

The pandemic is causing a profound paradigm shift that is reconfiguring how we approach every aspect of social and economic life, adding renewed energy and commitment to actions to eradicate persistent gender gaps and inequalities. Part III presents an overarching strategy comprising seven pillars for building back better in a way that eliminates the gaps.

1. Support the collective action of women, especially grassroots organizations

Many grassroots organizations have a unique understanding of their communities' needs and priorities yet lack the ability to engage as decision-makers at the

highest levels. Creating a culture of recurring conversation and feedback between local voices and high-level leadership will be key to ensuring inclusive progress.

2. Recognize and support youth leadership

Bridging generational divides and engaging youth as active partners are essential for creating a broad base for advancing the gender equality agenda. While today's youth have unprecedented technological capacities, participation needs to be extended to rural and underserved areas in order to democratize digital access and enable widespread participation.

3. Pursue intersectional demands for justice

From race to ethnicity, sexual orientation to poverty status, rural to urban livelihoods, prioritizing an intersectional approach to gender equality that recognizes women's diverse identities and experiences will drive progress across the global agenda.

4. Engage with powerful men and traditional authorities

Women will not win the fight for gender equality alone. Enlisting support from powerful men—from the highest level to the local and household levels—will accelerate the movement toward equality by helping to overcome resistance and promoting norms of power sharing between men and women.

5. Catalyze the private sector as a key partner

The private sector is powerfully positioned to accelerate women's progress in the workplace, in the media, and in entrepreneurship. Greater cooperation is needed among the private sector, governments, and international institutions.

6. Reform and scale up multilateral support for equity

The compounding effects of COVID-19 on the barriers to equality demand strong multilateral action and reaffirm the importance of building resilient institutions during good times as well as bad. Ensuring that the rhetoric of global institutions is translated into reality is a top priority.

7. Expand access to better data

Data disaggregated by sex and other demographic indicators are key to addressing the intersectional challenges facing women. Without more and better gender-specific data, properly tracking the implementation of the gender equality agenda is impossible.

* * *

Now is the time to champion the organizational and decision-making frameworks that will shape the next 25+ years. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action is the crucial framework for a post-COVID-19 world, but it must be fully implemented to be effective. Taking stock of progress, persistent gaps, and what works and drawing on the experience of women leaders and youth activists, Beijing + 25 provides the foundation and inspiration to accelerate change. Our suggested way forward outlines inclusive and effective approaches to finally realize and build on the vision of 1995.

Introduction

The 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action—adopted by consensus following the mobilization of nearly 50,000 government delegates, experts, civil society representatives, and activists at the Fourth World Conference on Women—embodies the commitment of the international community to achieve gender equality and to provide better opportunities for women and girls. The declaration evinces a determination to "advance the goals of equality, development and peace for all women everywhere in the interest of all humanity." Twenty-five years on, it remains a powerful inspiration for advancing women's rights.[16]

The urgency and scale of the COVID-19 crisis demand bold solutions. While responding to the pandemic is threatening lives and straining resources, it also presents an unprecedented opportunity to reshape social, cultural, and economic dynamics—to rethink, reset, and build back better, particularly for women and girls. This has created a window for transformative change—and a responsibility to act.

The COVID-19 global crisis has thrown the disparities and risks facing women and girls into stark relief—not least the economic repercussions and worsening threats to women's safety in the home—underlining the importance of keeping longer-term goals in mind, even in an emergency.

As we lean into the response to this crisis, we must bring a renewed sense of urgency to building a global community—with the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action at the center—in which everyone, especially women and girls, can be hopeful about the future. While the divisions and inequalities in our world may seem greater than ever, so is humanity's ability to resolve them.

This report was developed in conjunction with a high-level group of global women leaders (see page iii) to reflect on continuing challenges and provide solutions for overcoming persistent obstacles to gender equality. This high-level group was joined by the Generation Equality leaders, a cohort of eight women leaders, activists, and policymakers who brought their perspectives to this report.[17] Their wisdom and experiences are reflected in these pages. Institutionally, the report represents a collaboration between the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security (GIWPS) and The Rockefeller Foundation.

Part I presents the broad picture, revealing major areas of the Beijing Platform—from the world of work to politics and leadership—where progress has been too slow, nonexistent, or reversed.

Part II examines several levers and potential entry points that have emerged as critical to efforts to accelerate and sustain progress for women and girls. Concrete examples are identified as promising practice.

Part III outlines strategies for the ways forward that emerged from discussions with women leaders.

Throughout, the report is deliberately selective in its focus and does not provide comprehensive coverage of

"Gender equality and women's rights are essential to getting through this pandemic together, to recovering faster, and to building a better future for everyone."
—António Guterres, United Nations Secretary-General

all the important topics under the Beijing Platform for Action. It builds on, but does not replicate, the wealth of analysis already done—in particular, the United Nations Secretary-General's 2020 review prepared by UN Women.[18] Likewise, there is an accumulating body of work that takes a gender lens to COVID-19, to which we cannot do full justice.[19]

PART I

Where do we stand today?

There have been important gains for women and girls since 1995—parity in education in many countries, far fewer deaths in childbirth, more women elected to parliament and to leadership positions in government and business, and reduced discrimination under the law.

Yet major gaps persist on multiple fronts. Women's paid labor force participation has stagnated globally, and women continue to carry the heaviest burden of unpaid work at home. Every year, 13 percent of women experience sexual or physical violence inflicted by intimate partners, with prevalence rising to 18 percent in fragile and conflict-affected countries.[20] Women remain largely excluded from decision-making—in governments, from local to the highest levels; in peace negotiations; and in corporate leadership.

As the United Nations Secretary-General underlined, the overall picture of progress is "far from what States committed to in 1995. Progress towards gender equality and implementing the Platform for Action has not been fast or deep enough; and has stalled and even reversed in some areas."[21]

Since the COVID-19 pandemic exploded around the world, a host of repercussions have emerged—beyond the direct threats to life and health associated with the virus itself.

Before COVID-19, 2020 was expected to be a year of reviewing achievements and accelerating progress on the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. Instead, COVID-19 threatens to roll back the modest gains made so far and slow or even reverse progress. Major threats to women's lives and livelihoods are associated with COVID-19—including the risks faced by frontline workers, rising rates of intimate partner violence, threats to women's rights to sexual and reproductive healthcare, growing injustice for workers, and discriminatory laws and lack of legal identity, as well as repercussions on forcibly displaced women.

The words of the United Nations Secretary-General quoted at the outset are a stark reminder that the global quest for gender equality remains a critical precondition for solving all types of global problems.

"This pandemic has made these 25 years to be a time when all of the underlying inequalities that we've been fighting about have been fully exposed for all to see."
—Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director of UN Women

Women's status and well-being matter

To set the scene amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2019 Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Index, which is estimated and published by GIWPS and the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), reveals important insights about global pandemic risks.

The WPS Index incorporates three basic dimensions of women's well-being—inclusion (economic, social, political); justice (formal laws and informal discrimination); and security (at the family, community, and societal levels)—which are captured and quantified through 11 indicators. The indicators are aggregated at the national level to create a global ranking of 167 countries.

We compared achievements on the 2019 WPS Index to the INFORM Epidemic Risk Index,[22] which measures the country-level risk of an epidemic outbreak that exceeds a country's capacity to respond (figure 1). The correlation is striking (–0.86) and much higher than that between the WPS Index and income per capita (0.62). This relationship reveals the major risks of exclusion, injustice, and insecurity for women amid the risks and hazards of the COVID-19 crisis.[23]

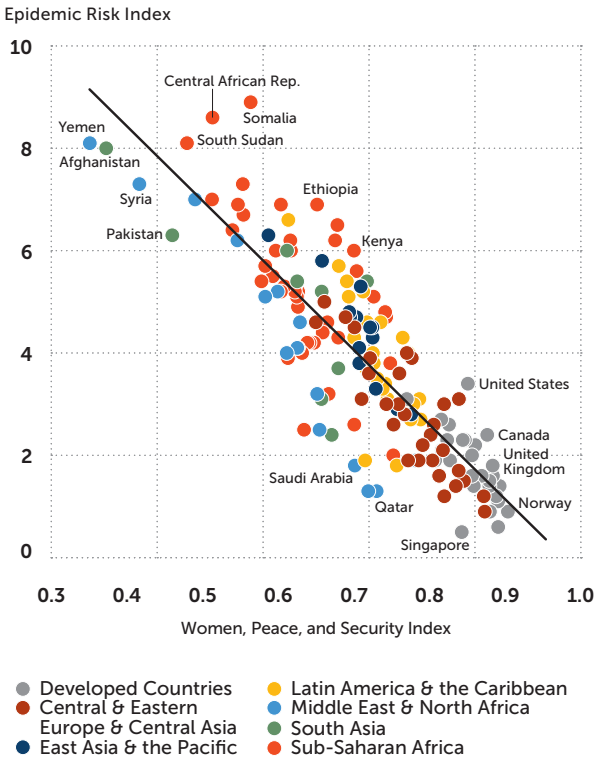
On the extremes, countries in the bottom decile on the WPS Index face a risk of humanitarian crisis about six times higher than countries in the top decile. The bottom decile comprises Afghanistan, Central African Republic, Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Libya, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Pakistan, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen. This underlines that countries at highest risk and least prepared to deal with a national emergency are also those where women are generally excluded, denied justice, and face insecurity at home, in the community, and at large.

We now step back to consider key areas of progress and persistent challenges over the longer term, looking first at the labor market and then at women's other persistent and overlapping disadvantages.

Enduring gaps in the labor market

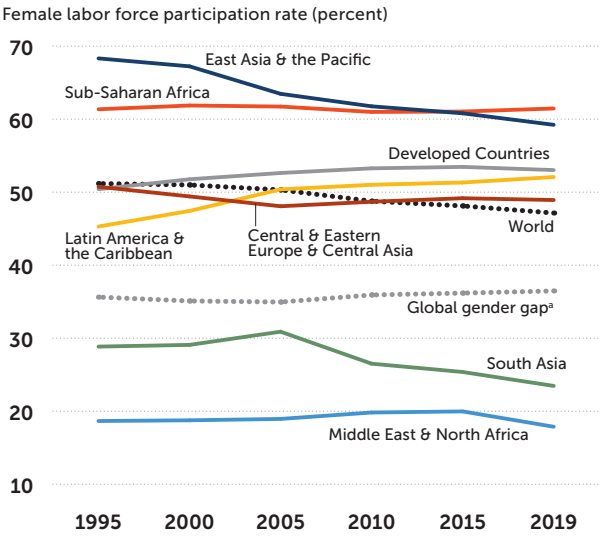
The global gender gap in labor force participation—the difference between male and female labor force participation relative to male labor force participation—has

FIGURE 1 Countries that do better on the Women, Peace, and Security Index have a lower risk of humanitarian disaster



Note: The INFORM Epidemic Risk Index measures the country-level risk of an epidemic outbreak that exceeds a country's capacity to respond (INFORM 2020).
Source: Klugman, Dahl, and Zhou 2020.

FIGURE 2 The global gender gap in labor force participation has hovered around 36 percent, 1995–2019



a. The global gender gap is the difference between male and female labor force participation rates relative to the male labor force participation rate.
Source: International Labour Organization, ILOSTAT database.

hovered around 36 percent since 1995 (figure 2). This stubborn persistence is despite steady, though uneven, progress in closing gender gaps in education and rapid declines in fertility. The low rates of women's participation in the labor force in the Middle East and North Africa and falling rates in South Asia are especially marked.[24] The most significant gains occurred in Latin America and the Caribbean and can be traced to supportive social programs, including access to childcare.[25]

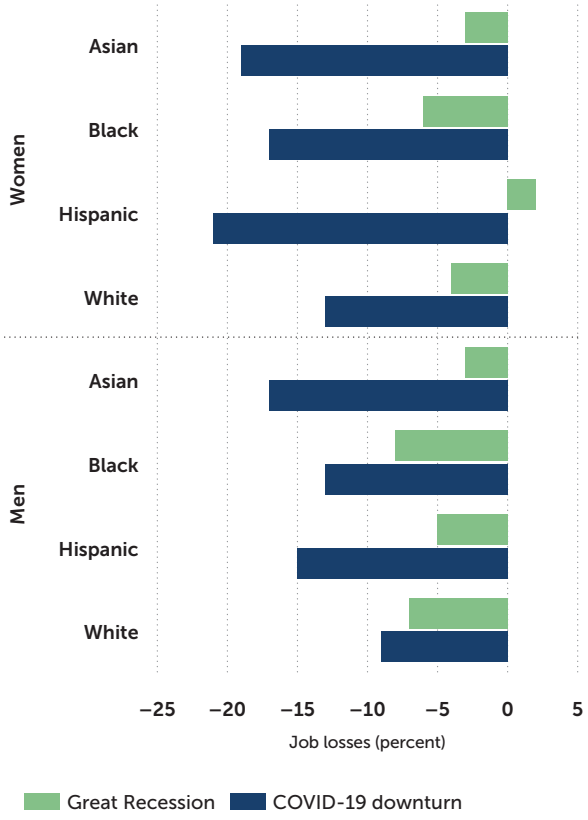
Many studies have documented the economic costs of gaps in labor market participation. The best-known estimate, by McKinsey & Company, is that achieving gender parity at work could boost global GDP by up to $28 trillion.[26] In Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development countries, closing the labor gender gap could boost GDP by 12 percent by 2030.[27]

The COVID-19 pandemic is exposing and worsening key gaps. In the United States, job losses for women have resulted in the largest gender unemployment gap ever reported,[28] with the highest rates of unemployment among Latina women (19 percent) and Black women (17 percent; figure 3).[29] In developing countries, women working in the informal sector are facing increased challenges, such as mobility restrictions, limited access to information on the behavior of the coronavirus, extra work burdens due to greater care responsibilities at home, and police harassment resulting in physical abuse and the confiscation of goods.[30]

The disconnect between rising levels of education and stagnant economic opportunities can be seen most starkly in the Middle East and North Africa region (figure 4). For example, in Morocco, despite a significant increase in girls' primary education enrollment rates from 55 percent in 1995 to 97 percent in 2018, the female labor force participation rate declined 2 percentage points, from 25 percent to 23 percent.

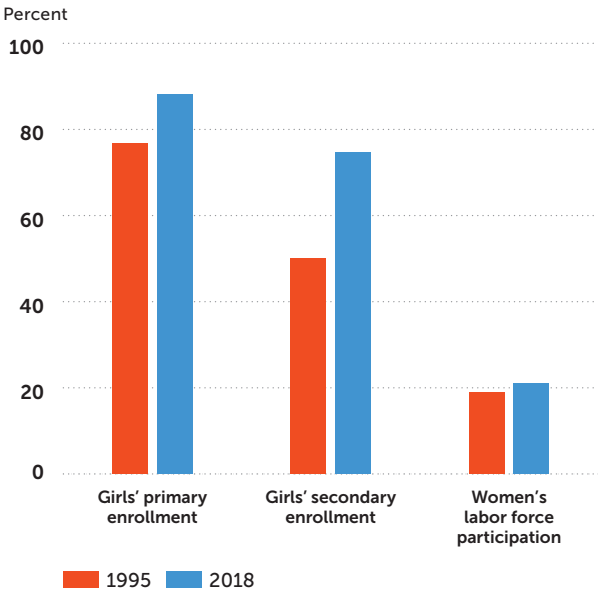
Gender norms—including the continuing patterns of unpaid work—help explain the persistent underrepresentation of women in paid work. Overall, the gender pay gap has narrowed slightly in the last decade,

FIGURE 3 Hispanic and Asian women have experienced sharper job losses than other workers in the COVID-19 downturn



Source: Pew Research Center 2020.

FIGURE 4 Education does not guarantee economic opportunity in the Middle East and North Africa



Note: Regional average were calculated using 12 countries for 1995 and 6 countries for 2018 for primary enrollment, 10 countries for 1995 and 8 countries for 2018 for secondary enrollment, and 16 countries for labor force participation, using data for the latest years available over 1993–1995 and 2016–2018.
Source: World Bank n.d.

but change has been slow, and significant gaps remain in most countries.[31]

"Women want to enjoy the right to open a bank account to start their own company. And it should be a right to enjoy the same salary as men for doing the same type of work."
—Margot Wallström, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sweden

Unpaid work continues largely unabated for women

Of total paid work, men account for nearly double the share of women (figure 5 for selected countries).[32] Of unpaid work, women's share is nearly triple that of men.[33]

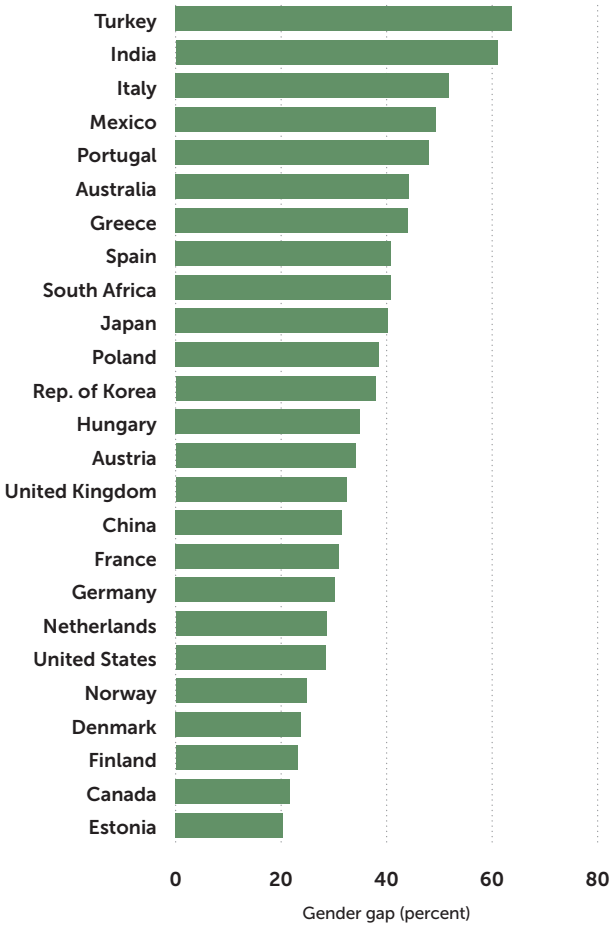
The uneven distribution of unpaid work and caring responsibilities among men and women, a well-known driver of gender inequality, has been exposed and amplified during the COVID-19 pandemic,[34] as family members fall ill and children are out of school.[35] In mid-2020, schools were closed in 191 countries, and single-headed households, typically led by women, have been hardest hit.[36]

Care responsibilities are a primary reason why women are not in paid work. In Europe before COVID-19, this reason was reported by around 31 percent of economically inactive women compared with only 4.5 percent of economically inactive men.[37] Large pay penalties on women and mothers are also a factor.[38] Having a child in the household is associated with gender pay gaps of 31 percent in Sub-Saharan Africa and 35 percent in South Asia, compared with only 4 percent and 14 percent for women in households without children.[39]

Too many young women are not in work or education

While women's educational attainment has been rising, it is important to underline that large and growing

FIGURE 5 Gender gaps are wide in the share of time spent in paid work, selected countries



Note: The gender gap is the difference in time spent on paid work by men and women, expressed as a percentage of time in total (paid and unpaid) work. Most recent year available.
Source: OECD Development Centre/OECD 2014.

numbers of young people, especially women, are not in employment, education, or training (NEET). Time out of the labor market and training erodes future prospects, as explicitly recognized in the SDGs.

Globally, 30 percent of young women and 13 percent of young men fell into the NEET category in 2018.[40] This affects about one in three young women across 108 countries, ranging from an average of 13 percent in developed countries to a massive 54 percent of young women compared with 10 percent of young men in South Asia (figure 6). Afghanistan, Iraq, and Yemen have the world's highest female NEET rates—all greater than 65 percent—and the challenges are also substantial in Latin America.

"Both men and women stepped up to increase domestic labor and childcare as a result of lockdown and homeschooling. But it was the women who stepped up disproportionately. The extra work got layered on top of the preexisting gender inequalities."
—Julia Gillard, Former Prime Minister of Australia

NEET rates are often especially high for young women in fragile and conflict-affected states. For example, in 2019, Afghanistan's youth NEET rate was 42 percent overall, but 66 percent for young women. Syria in 2019 had an overall youth NEET rate of 33 percent and a female youth NEET rate of 47 percent.

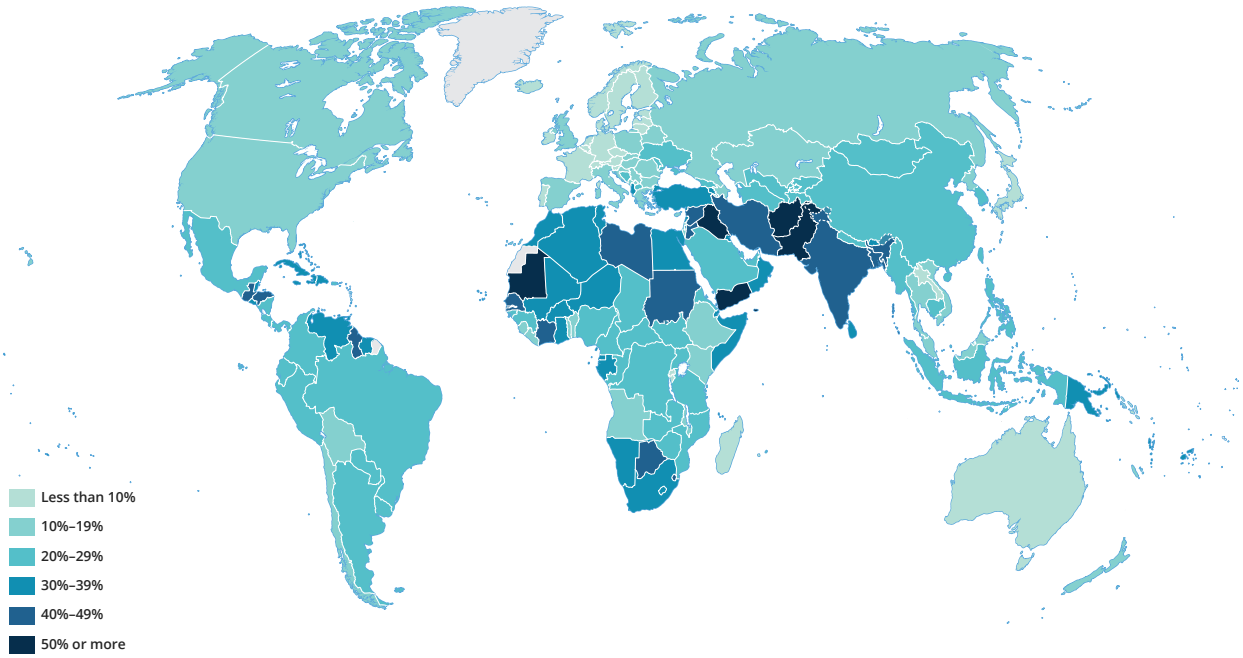
The COVID-19 pandemic threatens to reverse earlier gains and erode girls' advances in educational attainment.[41] In Mali, Niger, and South Sudan—among the lowest-performing countries in girls' school enrollment—the pandemic has forced over 4 million girls out of school.[42] The 2014 Ebola crisis in Liberia and Sierra Leone revealed that at-home care responsibilities, sexual violence and exploitation, and economic hardships led to higher school dropout rates and lack of re-enrollment among girls.[43] Based on that experience, the Malala Fund estimated that 10 million secondary school-age girls could remain out of school following the COVID-19 pandemic.[44] The picture is worse for girls living in fragile states and for adolescent girls in refugee camps, who are only half as likely to enroll in secondary school as their male peers.[45] In a recent survey by the Center for Global Development, most staff of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) working with youth worldwide reported that girls faced greater exposure to gender-based violence as a result of school closures, highlighting further risks to girls' safety.[46]

Low-status, low-paid work still dominates

Of women around the world who do work for pay, a majority are in traditionally female-dominated sectors and occupations, which are associated with lower earnings.

"We need to set a higher standard for workplace policies and benefits—with programs and flexibility that are equally used and adopted by men and women. This will help ensure that we create more equality at home and in the family."
—Carolyn Tastad, Group President for North America at Procter & Gamble

FIGURE 6 Female youth (ages 15–24) not in education, employment, or training, 2019



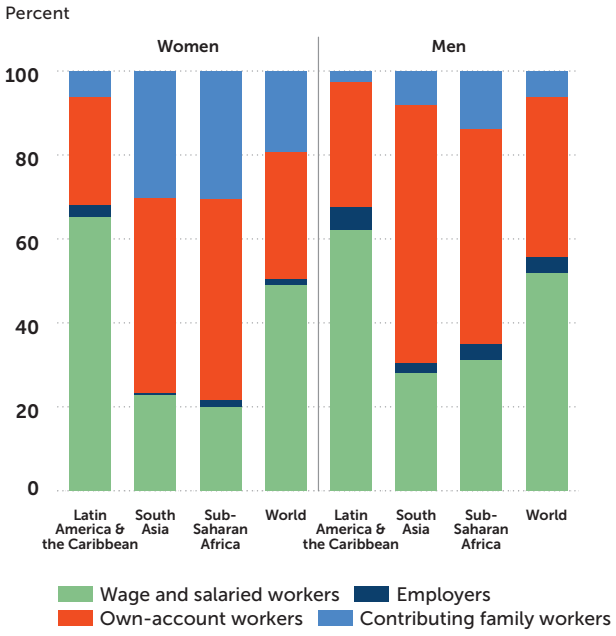
Source: Data are based on National Labor Surveys, ILOSTAT n.d.

Informal work, by definition, lacks legal and social protection and is often insecure and poorly paid. Globally, women's employment in agriculture, where most work is informal, declined from 41 percent in 1995 to 27 percent in 2019. East Asia and the Pacific experienced the largest fall—22 percentage points. In South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, however, more than half of working women (59 and 55 percent, respectively) remain in the agricultural sector.[47] And many labor as contributing family workers or on their own account (figure 7).

Higher rates of women in informal work mean less social protection and limited access to social safety nets.[48] During the Ebola crisis, quarantine measures led to increased poverty and food insecurity among women.[49] During the COVID-19 pandemic, many female-dominated sectors, such as retail and haircare,

"COVID-19 is making clear that crises impact women disproportionately. It also gives policymakers an unprecedented opportunity to mainstream gender considerations in all policy formulation as the basis for a successful post-COVID recovery."
—Marta Lucía Ramírez, Vice President of Colombia

FIGURE 7 Small shares of women in wage and salary work in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa



Source: International Labour Organization, ILOSTAT database, modeled estimates.

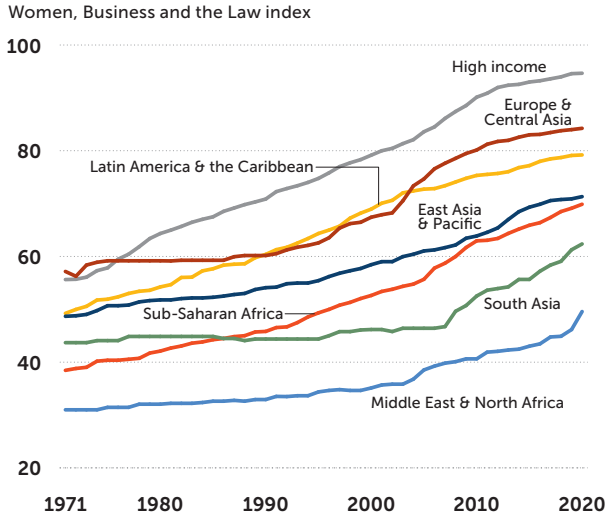
have been especially hard hit by social distancing and stay-at-home measures. Other working women, such as nurses[50] and grocery clerks, are on the front lines, where their health is at greater risk.[51]

Addressing legal discrimination

Ending legal discrimination against women is receiving growing attention. As captured in the World Bank's Women, Business and the Law index, the number of discriminatory laws has been declining across regions (figure 8; higher values indicate an improvement).[52] The UN Secretary-General counts 274 reforms toward gender equality across 131 countries between 2008 and 2017, covering such vital aspects of women's lives as inheritance, family law, and protection against violence, as well as restrictions on where women can work. Countries made progress on legal reforms ranging from mobility to pensions. The United Arab Emirates was one of a dozen countries that improved women's legal standing in work and pay by lifting all gender-based job restrictions, including limited work hours for women, and by opening to women all industries and jobs that had previously been limited to men, including in agricultural, manufacturing, mining, and energy industries.

Implementing these legal reforms will be key. Germany and Iceland show what equal pay laws might look like. German companies with more than 500 employees are required to publish reports on their efforts to achieve equal pay. In Iceland, companies with 25 or more employees require government-issued equal pay certification. Not surprisingly, having fewer legal barriers is associated with better economic opportunities, as measured in higher labor force participation of women and smaller gender wage gaps.

FIGURE 8 Improving trends in women's legal status and repealing discriminatory laws, by region, 1970–2020



Note: Higher values on the index indicate less legal discrimination.
Source: World Bank 2020a.

Persistent and overlapping disadvantages

Behind national averages, women who face multiple forms of disadvantage typically have more limited opportunities and worse outcomes. Sources of disadvantage include poverty, migrant status, ethnicity, race, and location. While data on the intersectional impacts of the pandemic are scarce, there is some evidence that vulnerabilities have been exacerbated. For example, for refugee women and girls in Rohingya camps, collecting extra water for cleaning and washing[53] puts them at additional risk of sexual exploitation and abuse.[54] Border closures have affected people trying to flee Venezuela, who were already at risk of violence, starvation, and disease, with the International Organization for Migration identifying indigenous women migrants among the most vulnerable.[55]

Refugee children are five times more likely to be out of school than nonrefugee children, and the situation is far worse for refugee girls. For every 10 refugee boys in primary or secondary school, there are 8 refugee girls in primary school and fewer than 8 in secondary school.[56]

Globally, women in the bottom wealth quintile are nearly four times more likely than those in the top quintile to give birth before their 18th birthday. Given family and community pressure, teen pregnancies are often associated with early marriage:[57] 90 percent of adolescent pregnancies in developing countries are to girls already married.[58] While disparities characterize all regions, the highest rates of teen pregnancy among the poor are in Sub-Saharan Africa (around 4 in 10 girls marry by age 18),[59] followed by Latin America and the Caribbean.

A World Bank analysis of 54 developing countries revealed that more than four in five women experienced at least one of the following deprivations: being married before her 18th birthday, not having a say over major household decisions, or condoning wife beating (saying that it is okay for a husband to beat his wife),

and more than one in eight women experienced all three deprivations at the same time.[60] The picture is much worse in some countries, as in Niger, where virtually all women faced at least one deprivation, and almost half (45 percent) faced multiple deprivations.

The COVID-19 pandemic is causing widespread disruptions to sexual and reproductive healthcare, exacerbating structural and systemic barriers, especially for vulnerable and marginalized groups. In Nigeria, many women and families are not aware that sexual and reproductive health services are still accessible during the pandemic, even as many resources have been diverted to the COVID-19 response.[61] Ebola had serious repercussions for maternal health in West Africa, emphasizing the importance of investments in women's health during health crises.[62] Estimates for 118 countries reveal that maternal mortality rates could rise by up to 40 percent over a six-month period due to the disruption of health systems and reduced access to food caused by the pandemic, which could translate into an additional 56,700 maternal deaths.[63]

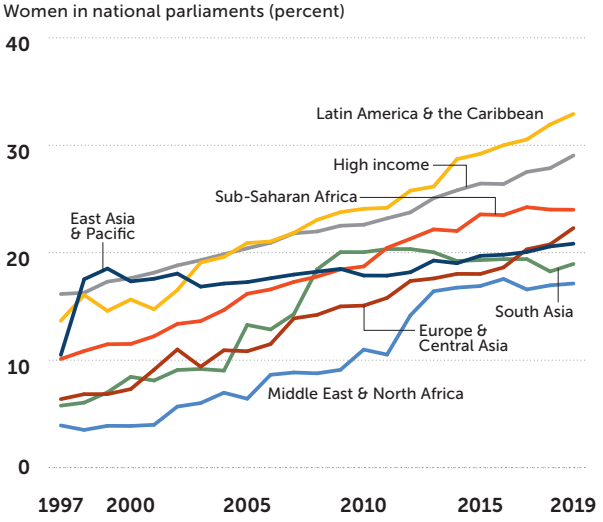
Slow gains in political representation and leadership

There have been gains in women's political representation and leadership since 1995, when women in positions of political power were hard to find. A minority of countries have exceeded a female representation rate of 40 percent and are moving toward parity in political representation and leadership. But in most countries, current rates are dramatically below parity (figure 9). Fifteen countries now have women in the highest position of political power—up from 5 in 1980, but down from the peak of 18 in 2018.[64]

We see this under-representation of women in positions of political power and influence replicated with COVID-19 task forces. In the United States, for example, only 2 of the 27 members of the White House Coronavirus Task Force are women. Of the 31 members and advisers of the World Health Organization's Emergency Committee on COVID-19, fewer than a third are women.[65]

"You need equal representation in peace negotiations. But women are still missing from the table."
—Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Former President of Liberia

FIGURE 9 Women's representation in national parliaments is rising but remains far below parity, 1997–2019



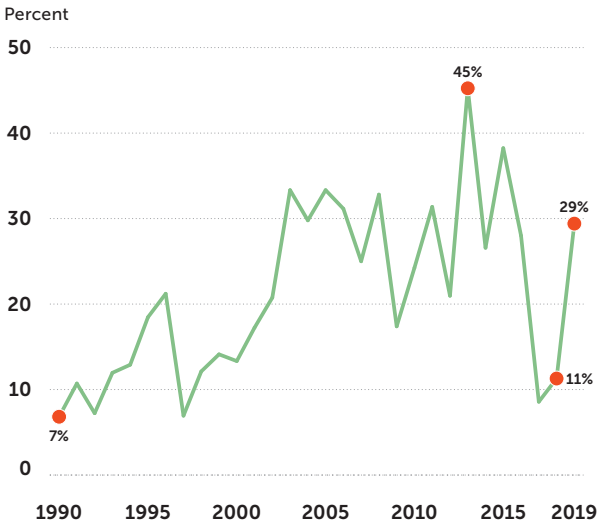
Note: Data for 2019 are as of February 1. Regions are as defined by the World Bank. High-income countries are excluded from their own regions.
Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union 2019.

Too little progress on the Women, Peace and Security Agenda

This year also marks the 20th anniversary of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, which reminds us that progress on women's participation in peace processes and security has been very slow and uneven across the globe.[66] Women still make up only 2.4 percent of chief mediators and 9 percent of mediators in formal peace processes.[67] The inclusion of gender provisions in peace agreements has been highly variable over time, with a substantial fall since the 2013 peak (figure 10).[68] Preliminary analysis traces the reversal to fewer women being included in peace negotiations and to relatively more peace agreements being negotiated in the Middle East and North Africa, where women's exclusion is higher.[69]

While women remain largely excluded from formal peace negotiations, over the past two decades most (about 60 percent) peace processes have incorporated identifiable informal peace efforts. Of these, about 71 percent had clear involvement of women's groups.[70] These groups have worked to organize for peace, legitimatize formal negotiations, and provide critical expertise to formal negotiators.[71] Yet, women are still rarely

FIGURE 10 **Declining share of peace agreements with provisions on women, girls, and gender issues from a peak in 2013, 1990–2019**



Source: Christien and Mukhatarova 2020.

seated at the peace negotiating table, and their efforts remain unconnected to formal peace processes.[72]

The growing threat of climate change

Global warming, land degradation, and biodiversity loss have accelerated over the last few decades.[73] There has been growing recognition of the major impacts of climate change and environmental degradation on women and girls[74] due to underlying gender inequalities in access to land and natural resources, which in turn threaten women's livelihoods and food security.[75] Drought and resource scarcity can heighten tensions and pose risks of forced displacement and conflict.[76] The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) has adopted policies to further integrate gender into climate action, such as incorporating gender into energy policies and future national action plans on climate, though actions need to be accelerated.[77]

Climate change, racial injustice, and the COVID-19 pandemic have brought to the fore the way intersecting systems of oppression and inequalities hurt women and marginalized groups the most. The sharpening crises around gender, climate, and security mean that the world's most vulnerable communities—poor and marginalized women and girls—face disproportionate risks.

Women are also typically excluded from decision-making around climate and disaster-risk reduction, despite some efforts to mainstream gender in policies and programming.[78] While women leaders and activists—especially young and indigenous women—have been at the forefront of climate advocacy and are critical to environmental protection, women's participation in climate-related decision-making generally remains below parity.[79] For example, only 2 of the 15 bodies established under the UNFCCC, the Kyoto Protocol, and the Paris Agreement have gender parity in representation.[80]

"The link between climate change and peace and security is really evident."
—Patricia Espinosa, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

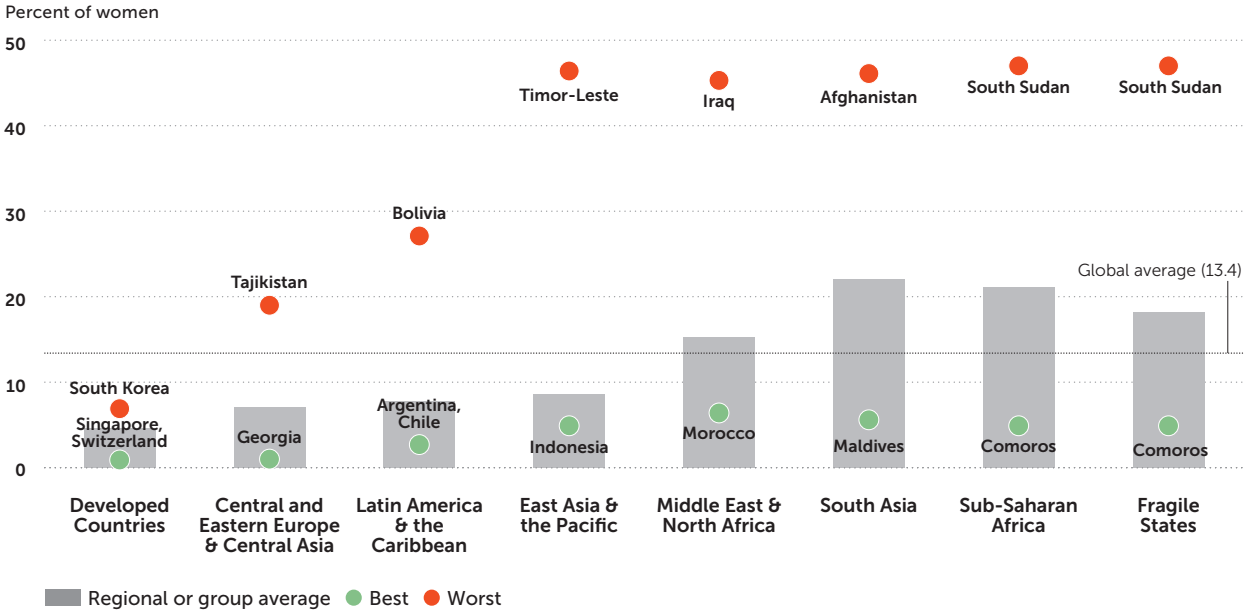
"One of the things that the women leaders on gender and climate change needed to do was to make space for grassroots women, for indigenous women, for young women—to give them a space at the table."
—Mary Robinson, Former President of Ireland

Violence against women

Violence against women is a pervasive challenge around the world and represents a broad security concern to society that can no longer be overlooked. The Beijing Conference affirmed the obligation of states to prevent and address gender-based violence, yet national implementation has often fallen short.[81] The good news is that such violence is now recognized as a major violation of human rights and a threat to peace and security, and momentum is increasing to address violence against women at global and national levels. This push for action comes in tandem with accumulating evidence about risk factors and the prevention strategies that work. For example, UN Security Council sanctions offer significant—yet largely underutilized—potential to advance women's protection from sexual violence in situations of conflict and to reduce the ability of perpetrators to act with impunity.[82]

Data about the patterns of violence against women are more widely available now than in 1995, though they are still inadequate to systematically monitor trends. The focus here is on intimate partner violence—while recognizing that other forms of violence, including female genital mutilation, are damaging the mental

FIGURE 11 The worst rates of current intimate partner violence are similar across several developing regions



Note: The South Asia group includes Iran.
Source: GIWPS and PRIO 2019.

and physical health of more than 200 million girls and women today.[83] Data on current levels of intimate partner violence are now available for about 140 countries (figure 11).

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in sharp spikes in reported violence against women and girls—rightly being referred to as a "shadow pandemic."[84] The Center for Global Development identified multiple pathways linking pandemics with increased violence against women, including economic insecurity and poverty-related stress, greater difficulty for women to escape abusive relationships, and reduced availability of health services and access to first responders.[85] France saw a 30 percent increase in domestic violence cases after it issued a stay-at-home order, and Tunisia has experienced a fivefold increase in reports of gender-based violence.[86] Similar trends are visible in Singapore, where domestic violence helplines reported a 33 percent increase in calls, and in Argentina, where emergency services have received 25 percent more calls since the onset of the crisis. Since we know that in the best of times, fewer than 1 in 10 cases of violence are reported in developing countries[87] and about 1 in 7 are reported across Europe,[88] this is very likely only the tip of the iceberg.

UN Women reports that "judicial, police, and health services that are the first responders for women are overwhelmed, have shifted priorities, or are otherwise unable to help. Civil society groups are affected by lockdown or reallocation of resources. Some domestic violence shelters are full; others have had to close or have been repurposed as health centres."[89] Other shelters are reportedly closing down due to a lack of funds. As the crisis of violence against women worsens during COVID-19, resource and capacity constraints are challenging efforts to respond.

* * *

Before the COVID-19 crisis, 2020 was expected to be a year to celebrate achievements and accelerate progress on the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 20th anniversary of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. Now, there is major concern that COVID-19 will slow progress on new legislation and on implementation of existing laws. It is critical that we maintain momentum and sharpen our focus on solutions to accelerate progress. It is to this set of challenges that we now turn.

PART II

Key levers for change—how are we going to get there?

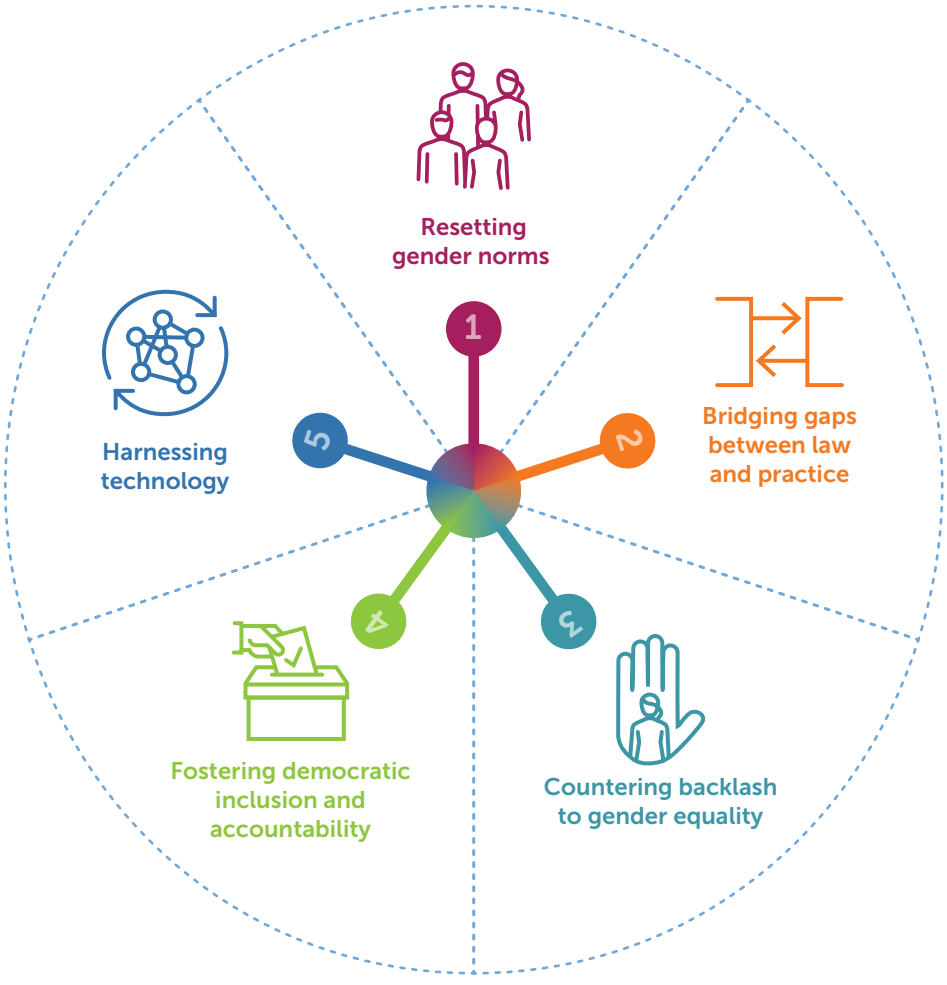
Several levers and potential entry points, connected in important ways, have emerged as critical to accelerating and sustaining progress for women and girls on the ground. Here, we highlight five key levers for progress (figure 12) and concrete examples of promising practice.

Lever 1. Resetting gender norms

Gender norms are shared understandings that shape individual and community perceptions of appropriate behaviors, roles, and attributes for men and women.[90] Discriminatory gender norms have impeded progress toward the Beijing goals on multiple fronts.[91] Changing gender norms has emerged as a global priority,[92] yet the persistence of discriminatory norms continues to limit the empowerment of women and girls.[93] These barriers are particularly pronounced in fragile and conflict-affected settings.[94] Shifting perceptions about which attitudes and behaviors are typical or desirable (perceived norms) can change actual behaviors down the line (actual norms).[95]

Promising cases have reset gender norms in unpaid care responsibilities, pay disparities, and job segregation through public investments in legislative action, in men's engagement in shifting harmful gender norms, and in childcare and parental leave. Changing norms through community-level interventions and efforts has emerged as key and is addressed under lever 2.

FIGURE 12 Five key levers for progress for women and girls



Source: Authors.

Recognizing and redistributing unpaid care work

Traditional gender norms often portray men as economic providers and women as mothers and primary caregivers. These norms create barriers to women's opportunities outside the home[96] and have adverse effects on families and communities.[97]

One way to change norms around care is to encourage men to take time off after the birth of a child. As of 2020, more than half of all countries have laws requiring employers to grant new fathers paid time off, though the median duration is only 5 days, compared with 98 days for new mothers.[98] How such leave is designed is important. Paid paternity leave of longer duration increases the time that men spend on household and care activities,[99] as experience shows in Australia, Denmark, the United Kingdom, and the United States,[100] but take-up is often low. Introducing nontransferable, father-specific leave alongside shared parental leave, as in Sweden[101] and Quebec, Canada, can increase take-up and lead fathers to spend more time on housework and childcare.[102]

MenCare+ has offered fatherhood preparation courses and information campaigns in Brazil, Indonesia, Rwanda, and South Africa to address fathers' reported feelings of being unprepared or ill-informed about caring for children:[103]

- In Rwanda, MenCare+ taught young fathers about maternal and child health, how to support their wife, and gender equality laws and policies. Following discussion sessions over four months covering communication and task-sharing, couples made more joint decisions, fathers became more involved in childcare, and men contributed more to household work.[104]
- In South Africa, the training improved participants' attitudes about gender equity and led to more equal divisions of caregiving.[105]
- When norms change to encourage fathers' increased role in caregiving, this can enhance children's physical, cognitive, emotional, and social development;[106] boost men's own well-being;[107] and improve women's physical and mental health.[108]

With COVID-19 making the traditional distribution of unpaid care more visible and requiring employers to develop more flexible systems for teleworking,[109] positive changes in the gender dynamics of care could be accelerated. A possible future silver lining to the crisis is that greater recognition will translate into a more equitable division of labor in households in the longer term, as well as positive changes in the norms and practices of employers.[110]

"Women still are doing most of the housework and most of the domestic responsibilities. How do we come up with childcare solutions that support women and also create more egalitarian relationships within the home?"
—Drew Faust, Former President of Harvard University

Closing the gender pay gap

Discriminatory gender norms lead men and women to make different choices on education and occupations, which in turn explain a large part of pay gaps. Gender pay gaps persist around the world despite laws mandating equal remuneration for work of equal value in 88 of 189 economies in 2020.[111] Closing the gender pay gap could infuse trillions of dollars into the global economy. One study by GIWPS and the International Rescue Committee found that closing the employment and pay gaps between refugee men and women alone could boost global GDP by up to $2.5 trillion.[112]

Addressing pay disparities requires a multipronged approach, going beyond passing laws prohibiting gender discrimination to changing norms around pay. Exposing practices that create gender pay gaps is one avenue. For example, in the United States, a dozen states now legally prohibit employers from asking potential hires for salary history, a practice that disproportionately disadvantages women and minority workers.[113]

Equal pay audits are another tool that can reveal practices that underline gender pay gaps, including differential starting salaries and performance pay.[114]

- Governments that require large employers to publish sex-disaggregated salary statistics include Australia, Denmark, Germany, Iceland, and the United Kingdom.[115]
- In Denmark, laws require companies with more than 10 employees to produce annual gender-segregated

"The COVID crisis has led to a profound re-gearing of how we value work and the essential jobs—the caring jobs, the ones that people are standing on their doorstep clapping for and are tremendously grateful for—that are disproportionately women's jobs. And I'm hoping that new sense of value is taken with us and helps us do some of the things we need to do to address the gender pay gap."
—Julia Gillard, Former Prime Minister of Australia

wage statistics.[116] After mandatory reporting was introduced in 2006,[117] the pay gap in Denmark declined by 2 percentage points, and private companies were more compliant (35 percent) than those in the public sector (27 percent).[118]

- In Iceland since 2018, employers with more than 25 workers who fail to demonstrate pay equality as certified by an independent auditor face fines of around $500 a day.[119]
- In 2019, Intel announced that the gender wage gap had closed across its U.S. workforce. Individual employees who were identified as having a gender pay gap received appropriate adjustments. The company says that it is now working on closing the gap for its 107,000 employees in more than 50 other countries.[120]

A major source of pay disparities is the persistent occupational segregation of women and men, with women more concentrated in lower status and lower paid jobs and lacking representation in high-paid digital occupations and jobs in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). Women entrepreneurs also tend to be concentrated in sectors deemed more traditional for women. In many countries, this segregation continues to be institutionally reinforced—90 countries still have at least one rule on the books restricting the positions that women can hold.[121] But progress is evident—just since 2017, 40 countries have enacted 62 reforms enhancing gender equality in the workforce.[122]

"It is such a waste of human talent not to have women fully engaged and welcomed in STEM fields."
—Drew Faust, Former President of Harvard University

Education opportunities and positive role models are critical to reducing barriers for women and girls to enter new sectors (box 2.1).[123] In Uganda, a World Bank program encouraged women entrepreneurs to enter male-dominated sectors through increased exposure and support from influential male role models, family, and friends. Women who cross over into male-dominated industries earn as much as men—and three times more than women who stay in female-dominated industries.[124]

The World Bank Gender Innovation Lab also found women's social networks, including access to female role models and educators, to be a key factor in women's training and employment decisions.[125] Female role models and mentors are especially important for shifting norms that discourage women and girls from pursuing STEM careers.[126] Increasing access to STEM education for women and girls has emerged as a pathway to gender equality and as a global priority under the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.[127] Girls Who Code, a program that has reached 300,000 girls through 8,700 clubs around the world,[128] found that high school girls who were encouraged by a role model were 62 percent more likely to pursue a major in computer science than girls who were not.[129]

Leveraging media platforms

The media can play a transformative role in advancing gender equality and addressing harmful norms by amplifying women's voices and presenting women as experts and storytellers. However, women remain severely underrepresented in the media, making up fewer than one in four of the people heard, read about, or seen in newspaper, television, and radio shows.[130] Media management, currently dominated by men, needs to open up space for women contributors and leaders to ensure that men and women are equally influential in selecting what information society consumes and how women's experiences are presented. A variety of media platforms can be harnessed to increase women's access to information and expand and strengthen social networks.[131]

Media can also influence social norms around women's engagement in unpaid care and in paid labor opportunities outside the home. Thus, increasing women's access to information and communication technologies is critical, particularly for women facing mobility or other social restrictions.[132]

- In Afghanistan, television was used to raise awareness among women about new gender equality laws and to expose Afghans to alternative gender norms.[133]
- In Brazil, exposure to smaller families through television programming has been linked to falling fertility rates.[134]
- In India, cable television exposed families to new norms, leading to attitude shifts that increased women's freedom of movement and decision-making at home.[135]

More direct efforts to influence norms have also been successfully undertaken. Since 1998, the Population Media Council (PMC) has used entertainment programming to shift norms through radio, television, and the

internet, reaching 500 million people across Africa, Asia, and the Americas.[136] To create powerful, context-specific content, PMC hires local writers and producers.[137] An evaluation of Pambazuko, a PMC program in Congo, found that radio listeners of the program were three times more likely than nonlisteners to support girls' education "to a high level" and two times more likely to agree that "girls' education benefits the entire family".[138]

BOX 2.1

Overcoming barriers to entrepreneurship

Women's entrepreneurship is a powerful force for economic growth, job creation, and inclusive prosperity. Yet, lack of capital often impedes women's entrepreneurial efforts. In Africa, for example, male-owned enterprises have six times more capital than female-owned enterprises, a disparity stemming from norms that obstruct women's access to loans and skills training.[1] It takes private, multinational, and state investment to make substantial progress. For example, Bank of America, in partnership with the Tory Burch Foundation and Vital Voices, connects businesswomen across the globe through a mentoring program with Bank of America executives.[2] In Nigeria, the Coca-Cola Company and the Educating Nigerian Girls in New Enterprises (ENGINE) program partnered to provide financial management, business, and leadership skills training to over 21,000 adolescent girls. The initiative yielded positive results, including increased business management skills, employment opportunities, and savings account ownership among participants.[3]

Steadily accumulating knowledge about what works and what does not suggests that in addition to skills development, interventions that are linked to increased success for women entrepreneurs include providing access to savings accounts and large cash or in-kind grants.[4] Many women-led businesses are also disadvantaged by not being formally registered, limiting their access to credit and social protection programs. World Bank evidence from Malawi highlights the importance of coupling business registration assistance with education for women entrepreneurs on using formal financial services—registration alone had no impact on business performance, but the joint approach increased women's profits by 15 percent.[5]

Innovation is contributing to the development of successful solutions, and it is important to track the results of such activities. The World Bank's Gender Innovation Lab set up soft skills training for women entrepreneurs in Togo, which boosted profits by 40 percent. This program now operates in nine countries including the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Jamaica, and Mexico.[6] The private sector is also a key player in boosting opportunities for women entrepreneurs. For example, the UN's partnership with Procter & Gamble includes programs in Egypt, Nigeria, Pakistan, and South Africa to expand small-scale women suppliers' and entrepreneurs' access to corporate value chains.[7]

Despite the potential gains from increased skills training and capacity building for women entrepreneurs and workers, these efforts alone are unlikely to achieve the necessary transformative changes. Traditional norms about gender roles and care responsibilities remain stubborn obstacles to women, highlighting the need for comprehensive approaches that include training in soft skills. Key starting points include equalizing access to education, working with men and boys to overcome patriarchal norms, and informing communities on the universal gains from women's empowerment.

Notes

1. World Bank Gender Innovation Lab 2020.
2. Verveer and Azzarelli 2015.
3. Klugman, Parsons, and Melnikova 2018.
4. Campos and Gassier 2017.
5. Campos, Goldstein, and McKenzie 2018.
6. World Bank Gender Innovation Lab 2020.
7. UN Women 2020d.

"In Congo, the media really played a big role in fighting against rape and sexual violence. In our local language, we didn't have a local word to talk about rape. We had to borrow a word from Swahili from Tanzania. And the media started to sensitize people about that new word."
—Chouchou Namegabe, Founder and CEO of ANZAFRIKA

Private sector firms, through their extensive network access and prominence, can be critical partners in promoting messages of equality in the media. For example, Procter & Gamble, in marketing its menstrual products brand *Always,* promotes girls' education by integrating messages of equality into advertisement campaigns that reached millions of consumers. Their "Like a Girl" campaign encouraged viewers to redefine the harmful notion that to do something "like a girl" was to do it in an unathletic and less skillful manner.[139]

"Advertising has the opportunity to shape how people see the world. It has the power to spark a conversation. It has power through that conversation, through that dialogue, to change minds."
—Carolyn Tastad, Group President for North America at Procter & Gamble

Working with men and boys to transform discriminatory gender norms

Accumulating evidence shows that engaging men and boys is necessary for changing norms to effectively bridge gender gaps. Promundo's Program H encourages young men to reflect on gender norms and helps them build skills that challenge those norms in a way that empowers women.[140] The process involves men and boys experiencing normative shifts in their perceptions of masculinity and seeing themselves as co-beneficiaries of progress on gender equality.

Program H has been adopted and adapted in diverse settings around the world[141] and integrated into schools in Brazil, India, and the Western Balkans, among other sites.[142] Training, quick chats, public events, posters, door-to-door discussions, and community conversations and meetings helped program participants exhibit more gender-equitable attitudes and behaviors—strengthening communication within couples, reducing gender-based violence, and improving attitudes around caregiving.[143] Gains include reduced self-reports by young married men of perpetrating intimate partner violence (India), reduced reports of sexual harassment of girls (India), reduced sexually transmitted diseases (Brazil), and increased condom use (Brazil and Chile).[144] In the United States, participants reported having more conversations about manhood with peers and family members than men in control groups (64 versus 40 percent), and overall results suggest that young men are eager for knowledge on program topics and for opportunities to discuss manhood, emotions, and violence.[145]

"We've been investing so much on empowering women and building the capacity of women to be leaders. But unless the attitudes and perceptions of men and boys change, there will be a thick glass ceiling we have to break through."
—May Sabe Phyu, Kachin Women's Rights Activist, Myanmar

In rural Tajikistan, the organization Zindagii Shoista had success implementing the What Works to Prevent Violence against Women and Girls Global Program.[146] Its 15-month intervention combining economic empowerment of women and household communication skills training halved the experience of intimate partner violence among married women. Men's self-reports of perpetrating intimate partner violence also dropped substantially, from 48 to 5 percent by the end of the intervention and remained at 8 percent 15 months later.[147]

Boosting girls' life skills and aspirations

Complementary gender-targeted approaches are boosting girls' capacity to challenge discriminatory norms. A study on what works to enhance women's agency found strong evidence that programs for adolescent girls—including training in soft skills and life skills—improve measures of self-efficacy, confidence, and attitudes toward gender norms.[148] For example:

- The Girl Empower program in Liberia provided life skills training and safe spaces to girls ages 13 and 14 and improved girls' attitudes toward gender equity and intimate partner violence.[149]
- In Ethiopian refugee camps, safe space and life skills training to combat intimate partner violence improved adolescent girls' attitudes about the appropriate age for marriage and having children.[150]
- BRAC Uganda, a national credit institution, established 1,500 girls clubs offering games, music, sex education, financial literacy, vocational training, and access to microfinance. Girls participating in the

clubs for two years were 58 percent less likely to marry early as girls who did not participate.[151]

Investing in girls' education is also a key strategy for promoting women's financial independence, building resilience and improving outcomes in families, and boosting economic growth.[152] Programs that offer incentives for families to keep girls in school have increased girls' access to education, sustained school enrollment, and reduced HIV infection and child marriage.[153] An evaluation of cash transfer programs for families in Morocco found that they increased school enrollment and re-entry for children, especially girls, and positively influenced parents' perceptions about the value of educating girls.[154]

Although child marriage is on the decline globally, an estimated 15 million girls are married before the age of 18.[155] Early marriage negatively affects maternal and child health and the education prospects of young mothers and their children.[156] A critical strategy for shifting norms around this practice is to invest in girls' education.[157] This can be achieved through legal changes such as compulsory schooling. In Turkey, a change in the compulsory schooling age was associated with a 44 percent decline in the marriage of girls under 16.[158]

Community-based initiatives such as the Campaign for Female Education (CAMFED) in Sub-Saharan Africa have supported the education of girls at risk of early marriage. Programs implemented in Tanzania showed a doubling of literacy rates and a fivefold increase in math scores for girls reached by CAMFED compared with girls in control schools.[159] Recognizing the link between education and child marriage, CAMFED provided a life skills and well-being curriculum to more than 830,000 girls across Africa in 2019, along with mentorship, to support girls academically and socially. Mentors who complete the 18-month commitment also receive interest-free loans to start or grow businesses.[160]

Another successful program was Berhane Hewan in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, and Tanzania, which combines community education and engagement of religious leaders, provision of school supplies, and incentives in the form of livestock for families whose daughters remain unmarried. In all three countries, the program significantly delayed marriage and increased girls' school enrollment. In Ethiopia, girls ages 10–14 who participated were three times more likely to be enrolled in school and 90 percent less likely to be married than those in the control group.[161]

The need for more rigorous research disaggregated by gender and age remains a significant barrier to targeted and measurable investment and accountability: fewer than one-tenth of the 232 SDG indicators are disaggregated this way.[162] This is discussed in more detail under lever 5 and in part III.

"Every woman, every girl deserves her shot at life, her opportunity based not on her biological reproductive value but on her inherent human dignity."
—Natalia Kanem, Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund

Lever 2. Bridging gaps between law and practice

Many governments have made national commitments and passed laws to improve gender parity, but around the world, implementation and practice too often fall short. Governments and multilateral institutions need to be held accountable and to adequately resource implementation measures so that laws and policies translate into accomplishments.

For intimate partner violence, governments and NGOs can close gaps between legal prohibitions and practice by conducting awareness and education campaigns, ensuring sufficient resources, and addressing adverse norms.

Most countries—155 according to the World Bank—now have some kind of domestic violence legislation on the books, including 30 of 48 Sub-Saharan African countries.[163] And almost half the countries in the Middle East and North Africa have passed new laws in the past five years protecting women against violence.[164] Jordan, Lebanon, and Tunisia all repealed laws allowing rapists to avoid jail time by marrying their victim. These crucial legislative changes are associated with lower rates of physical intimate partner violence,[165] but the laws are not always fully implemented and enforced.

Implementing government reforms to ensure enforcement of gender equality

Comprehensive approaches can pay off. The key is for the whole of government to take on responsibility for

"Unless we can transform words and ideals into actionable instruments and policy instruments, unless we can do that, they're all words."
— Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Former President of Liberia

reform, with adequate funding, rather than delegate it to a single ministry. Sweden has a comprehensive and coordinated set of policies to implement its extensive legal framework for preventing violence against women,[166] which is central to the government-wide policy of gender equality.[167] The national Gender Equality Agency has a budget to implement such specific prevention measures as: [168]

- Police-led awareness and public outreach campaigns.
- Prison programs aimed at reducing recidivism among perpetrators of intimate partner violence.
- Interventions by public school officials.[169]

In 2018, following the 2017 adoption of a National Strategy to End Violence against Women and Girls, the rate of reported sexual assaults in Sweden fell for the first time since 2012.[170]

Increasing women's numbers in the justice system and augmenting their roles can build confidence and strengthen reporting. The gradual rollout of all-women justice centers in Peru[171] and all-women police stations in India[172] has been associated with increased reporting of gender-based violence. In Liberia, survey respondents who had contact with female police officers reported greater confidence and trust in the police as an institution because they considered the police force to be more restrained and less likely to abuse civilians.[173] In Ukraine, leaders in the Ministry of Internal Affairs served as a catalyst for women's inclusion in the police force. When establishing a new police patrol force, the ministry ensured that at least a quarter of recruits were women. The resulting higher number of women police officers has gone hand in hand with an increase in reports of domestic violence, likely because survivors trust women police officers.[174]

"Changing a culture and changing legislation work hand in hand with the governments that really have the will to change the situation."
—Leila Alikarami, Lawyer and Human Rights Advocate, Iran

Drawing in community leaders to improve sexual and reproductive health and to reduce violence

While engaging support can be especially challenging in conservative and religious communities, evidence is accumulating about how to achieve it.

In Nigeria's Sokoto state, where 95 percent of the population identifies as Muslim, religious leaders play a powerful role in defining social values.[175] Since 2016, the Strengthening Health Outcomes for Women and Children (SHOW) project with Plan International Canada has engaged religious leaders and local government authorities in trainings to improve maternal, newborn, and child health (MNCH) and sexual and reproductive health and to become more responsive to women and adolescents. SHOW Nigeria engaged religious leaders in exploring Quranic support for gender equality and co-created *The Islamic Perspectives on MNCH Issues Manual,* which was endorsed by Muslim leaders from diverse schools of Islamic thought across Sokoto. One leader stated, "My followers now know that it is a religious obligation to support women's decision-making in the home and girls' empowerment because the Quran says so."[176] Many leaders began linking messages of equality to Quranic teachings in their Friday sermons, which helped prevent community backlash against the SHOW workshops and encouraged greater involvement of men in supporting maternal health at home and in the community. Similar SHOW projects have been implemented in Bangladesh, Ghana, Haiti, Nigeria, and Senegal.

The NGO Tostan has also been successful in shifting norms through its Community Empowerment Programs,[177] which begin with community education on human rights, including the right to health and freedom from violence, and on the long-term impacts of practices like female genital mutilation/cutting and child marriage.[178] UNICEF estimates that globally at least 200 million women and girls have been subjected to female genital mutilation/cutting.[179] The practice, which is entrenched in cultural norms, can result in severe health complications for women and girls.[180] Through a series of classes, local adult and youth community members develop agendas for action to raise awareness within their own social groups and other communities. To date, 8,830 communities have engaged in Tostan's programming, and eight countries have issued public declarations abandoning female genital mutilation/cutting and child marriage.[181]

Through the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)–United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Joint Programme to Eliminate Female Genital Mutilation, government officials, national imam associations, and civil society in Mauritania collaborated to raise awareness around female genital mutilation/cutting as a human rights violation and promote public declarations of abandoning the practice in nearly 700 village communities over four years. Since 2008, the program has been implemented in 16 African countries.[182]

SASA! is a well-known community-led program with demonstrable success in transforming gender norms to reduce violence against women.[183] The program uses multiple channels to catalyze community-led change in norms and behaviors that perpetuate gender inequality, violence, and increased HIV vulnerability for women. SASA! (meaning "now" in Kiswahili) engages with health workers, local authorities, and community activists who use communication materials, media, and advocacy tools to introduce new concepts in training.[184] A rigorous evaluation of the program found, among other outcomes, that male participants reported:

- More equitable decision-making in the family.
- Greater appreciation of their partner's work in the household.
- Significantly lower social acceptance of intimate partner violence among men and women.[185]

SASA! is now used in 25 countries and more than 60 organizations in various contexts, including in refugee camps, high-density urban communities, and faith-based institutions.[186] Rural Tanzania's SASA! shifted men's attitudes about gender and violence against women, with men reportedly 11 percentage points more likely to help a woman experiencing violence in 2017 than in 2016.[187]

UNFPA and the World Bank's Sahel Women's Empowerment initiative engages religious and traditional leaders to promote dialogue and community-based interventions through life-skills training and sexual and reproductive health initiatives for adolescent girls and women. The success of the initiative—which is also targeted at engaging men and boys—has prompted its adoption in Cameroon, Guinea Conakry, Madagascar, Senegal, the Gambia, and Togo.[188] In Sierra Leone, President Maada Bio recently announced a new "radical inclusion" approach to education, outlining policies guaranteeing girls' full access to education and appointing a task force to ensure implementation. Grassroots organization instigated these changes after activists brought the country's ban on pregnant girls attending school to the Economic Community of West African States Regional Human Rights Court, which struck down the law.[189]

Engaging media in change efforts

As outlined under lever 1, changing norms is critical to changing practices, with demonstrated success emerging from thoughtful community interventions around the world. Information media can promote behavioral changes to close gaps between laws and practices.[190]

"In our call for action, as we work on transferring laws to practice, a greater awareness towards local realities and local leadership could benefit the cause of women's rights everywhere."
—Shaharzad Akbar, Chairperson for the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, Afghanistan

Experimental evidence from 112 rural villages in Uganda shows that mass media interventions can reduce violence against women and substantially increase women's willingness to report violence.[191] Globally, almost two-thirds of governments reported that they engaged in awareness-raising campaigns among young people and the general public in educational settings to reduce violence against women.[192]

In New Zealand, where intimate partner violence has been illegal since 1995,[193] the government mounted an "It's not OK" advertising campaign in 2007. Surveys suggest that 90 percent of people remembered the ads, with more than two-thirds of them agreeing that the campaign aided their understanding of unacceptable behavior.[194] From 2005 to 2013, the reported annual rate of violence against women fell from about 9 to 6 percent, and the reported annual rate of sexual violence against women fell from 5 to 3 percent.[195]

Change Starts at Home, an intimate partner violence intervention program in Nepal, uses educational radio entertainment to shift perceptions, behaviors, and norms that perpetuate intimate partner violence. Participants who were exposed to messaging about violence against women were more likely to have aided survivors of intimate partner violence in the past year.[196]

Disconnects between leadership and local perspectives need to be overcome in order to bridge laws and practice. High-level leaders need to engage with people on the ground who are aware of who has access to mechanisms of legal enforcement.

"We quickly understood that the vehicle to getting things done is not the policy that sits nicely framed on the shelf but the community activists, many of whom have devoted their lives to equality."
—Natalia Kanem, Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund

Allocating adequate resources

Equality requires shifting investments to marginalized communities. Uruguay's national system of care is an example of successfully reallocating state investments. In collaboration with UN Women and UNFPA, government surveys prior to the intervention revealed that women spent two-thirds of their week engaged in unpaid labor, primarily caring for children and elderly family members, compared with one-third for men. In response, and citing the Beijing Conference, the Uruguayan government passed the Care Act of 2016, which guarantees access to quality care services, making care a collective societal responsibility and lifting the burden of care from women.[197] The law frees up women's time to participate in paid work, while protecting child development and the well-being of others in need of care.[198]

"We need to have a national-level commitment from the government. And one of the indicators to show government commitment would be how much they allocate of the national budget on promoting gender equality."
—May Sabe Phyu, Kachin Women's Rights Activist, Myanmar

Promising models to address intimate partner violence include one-stop centers for women survivors, which help overcome reporting barriers and provide high-quality care.[199] By offering medical services, legal advice, and social services in one place, these one-stop centers improve access to justice and outcomes for survivors.[200]

A UN study on legal aid found that at least 64 countries provide legal advice and court services to female survivors of violence, facilitating their access to justice and helping bridge the gap between laws and practice.[201] Mobile courts—temporary courts in rural or remote regions—provide access to justice for people otherwise neglected by the system. In Somaliland, the UN Development Programme and the Ministry of Justice set up mobile courts in the five regional capitals. Reports indicate that women have benefited most from the mobile courts.[202] In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the mobile court program is a collaborative undertaking of Congolese NGOs, the American Bar Association, the Open Society Foundation, and other international NGOs.[203]

"Put the leadership where it belongs, in the community, give them the responsibility to protect their own lives and livelihoods, and then give them the support, the technical support, the financial support, that they need. But listen to them, because they know their own culture, tradition, and all."
—Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Former President of Liberia

Investments in sexual and reproductive health—particularly for young girls—are necessary to enable women's full autonomy and to achieve the SDGs. A recent World Health Organization study estimated that providing contraceptive, maternal, newborn, and child health services in 74 low- and middle-income countries had a benefit–cost ratio of close to 9:1 and projected that the ratio would rise to almost 39:1 by 2050 as a result of the long-term gains in infant survival, children's health and education, women's economic productivity, and household income.[204]

Lever 3. Countering backlash to gender equality

Effectively countering backlash to gender equality is an ongoing struggle and key to sustained progress. Resistance can come from multiple sources, typically from men (who benefit from the status quo), fundamentalist groups, and populist governments that demonize and misrepresent gender equality as a threat to "traditional values."

Pushback against gender equality can range from denial of the issue and inaction to aggressive backlash and repression. Such defense of the status quo can also come from women.[205] Resistance to gender equality is increasingly being instrumentalized as political currency or used to win votes.

Political violence against women activists, political leaders, and demonstrators has emerged as a prevalent form of backlash: in 2018, more than 600 such episodes were recorded across Central Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, South and Southeast Asia, the Middle East and North Africa, and parts of Central and Eastern Europe.[206] Surveys of female political party members in Côte d'Ivoire, Honduras, Tanzania, and Tunisia found that more than half had experienced some form of violence during their political work, including threats, economic violence, psychological harm, and sexual and physical abuse. Women most often faced violence when serving in positions of authority, reflecting resistance to women in power.[207]

Authoritarian and nationalist leaders are exploiting the COVID-19 crisis to justify open-ended states of emergency, restrictions on civil liberties, and heavy

censorship of information.[208] For example, Prime Minister Viktor Orban of Hungary has gained open-ended authority to govern by degree and baselessly imprison journalists, while President Rodrigo Duterte of the Philippines has ordered soldiers to shoot residents who violate the lockdown order.[209] Around the world, COVID-19 has triggered the abuse of power by nondemocratic and democratic governments alike, collectively eroding norms of justice and an environment conducive to women's progress. This spike in authoritarian behavior must not be allowed to evolve into a permanent trend in the post-COVID-19 era.

"Now you see leaders defending nationalism, populism, xenophobia, anti-migrant, anti-Muslim, anti-Jewish. And you ask yourself, how come? What happened?"
—Michelle Bachelet, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and former President of Chile

Rallying collective action to counter backlash

Global, national, and grassroots efforts to counter backlash to gender equality include mass demonstrations, social media campaigns, and other forms of collective action that expose harmful gender norms while educating communities on how gender equality benefits everyone in society, not just women.

Experience is accumulating on how countering backlash can sustain efforts to advance gender equality:

- Armenia adopted landmark legislation in 2013 on Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities for Men and Women, despite a strong tradition of patriarchal norms. At the time of the law's passage, 57 percent of men and 44 percent of women tolerated domestic violence, while rates of son preference and sex-selective abortions of female fetuses were among the highest in the world.[210] The law met powerful backlash fueled by ultranationalist groups, which propagated mass hate speech, condemned women's rights advocacy for threatening traditional family values, and targeted activists through online harassment and mockery.[211] This campaign was successfully countered by women's groups using social media as a megaphone. The Coalition to Stop Violence against Women energized collaboration across women's rights organizations through demonstrations, petitions, press conferences, and protests outside government buildings against gender-related injustice and other issue areas, such as the environment.
- Collective action in Poland also successfully countered efforts to limit women's rights. In 2016, the national government was poised to pass a law banning all abortions. Days before the vote, more than 100,000 Poles publicly demonstrated and wore black to show opposition to the proposed legislation.[212] Numerous restaurants, universities, and other employers allowed women to take the day off to protest. Solidarity demonstrations in Barcelona, Berlin, Brussels, Paris, and London joined the call to deter passage of this legislation. In the face of this mass activism, the proposed law did not receive enough votes in parliament.
- In Malaysia early in the COVID-19 crisis, women mobilized to end entrenched government sexism. The Women, Family, and Community Development Ministry had issued a series of posters and infographics that outlined "good behavior" for women at home, including dressing well, wearing makeup, and not irritating husbands. Social media backlash from individuals and women's organizations pressured the government to withdraw the posters and issue a public apology.[213]

Navigating resistance

Resistance to gender equality can occur at all levels, from international organizations to the workplace. In Victoria, Australia, VicHealth has proposed several strategies to navigate resistance in everyday conversations and interactions:[214]

- *Identify allies.* Forming networks of gender-equality advocates in workplaces, community spaces, and government bodies fosters mutual support and the exchange of effective, context-specific responses to backlash.
- *Recognize domination techniques.* Domination techniques applied to gain power during conversations delegitimize or undermine the views of the other person. Techniques include shaming or attempting to make the other person feel invisible and ridiculing the other person's ideas. Recognizing these techniques can diminish their effectiveness in asserting power and controlling the conversation.
- *Actively listen.* Creating space for diverse views, including misconceptions about gender equality, increases the likelihood that respectful listening will be reciprocated in more open conversations.
- *Apply framing strategies.* Citing facts and evidence for the universal gains from gender equality—such as McKinsey & Company's *Power of Parity Report*[215] and

"We need to diagnose all the elements of where the antibodies are in the system, where the resistance is, and then have different kinds of interventions and different levels of interventions, depending on where we see the resistance. A lot of this is going to require big systems change."
—Judith Rodin, Former President of The Rockefeller Foundation

countless other publications—can boost awareness and understanding of issues facing women and girls. Sharing personal experiences can further debunk myths around gender equality.

- *Use dialogue, persuasion, and explanation.* Engaging in ongoing conversations fosters opportunities to discuss and unlearn harmful norms, for both individuals and organizations, whereas imposing a conversation about gender is likely to trigger immediate resistance.

These strategies build on the power of collective action, as well as of individual efforts. Fostering solidarity through face-to-face and virtual means can counter backlash and sustain progress on gender equality. Despite the victories, however, countering backlash is a continuing battle that requires complementary efforts to change harmful norms and structures that are at the root of resistance.

Lever 4. Fostering democratic inclusion and accountability

As outlined in part I, progress on women's representation in national and local elected bodies and leadership positions has been incremental across much of the world. Cases of exceptionally great progress have been associated with special measures such as women's quotas, gender caucuses, and training in capacity-building for women to run for office.

Pursuing special measures for gender inclusion

Almost two-thirds of countries have constitutional or other legal provisions—such as quotas, reserved seats, and benchmarks—to promote women's political participation.[216] But not all of these measures have boosted women's representation. Quotas are most effective when they include sanctions for noncompliance as well as a numerical target.[217] They should also be tailored to the country context. The rate of women's representation in parliament in conflict and post-conflict countries with legislated quotas (24 percent) is more than twice that in conflict and post-conflict countries without such quotas (11 percent).[218]

"You need affirmative action to ensure that you diminish or eliminate the gap, because if you treat everybody the same, women will never be there."
—Michelle Bachelet, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and former President of Chile

On women's representation in parliament, Bolivia ranks third after Rwanda and Cuba. Women hold 53 percent of the seats in the Bolivian Chamber of Deputies[219] (up from 22 percent in 2009)[220] and 47 percent of the seats in the upper house,[221] thanks to voluntary party quotas and legislated quotas at various levels of government. To address the initial lack of compliance, the 2010 Electoral Law introduced sanctions for noncompliance and required that both principal and alternate candidate lists in multimember constituencies include equal numbers of men and women presented in alternating order.[222]

Changing attitudes about leadership

The panchayat gender quotas mandated in India since the mid 1990s have demonstrated that seeing is believing—seeing women in local leadership positions changes attitudes toward women's leadership.[223] Women's leadership has grown considerably, with women today running in non-quota seats as well.[224] In Afghanistan, the National Solidarity Program's requirement of gender-balanced community development councils altered perceptions of women functioning in the public space, resulting in a 22 percent increase in acceptance of women's membership in village councils.[225] Women's inclusion in these councils also led to increases in girls' school attendance and women's mobility across villages.[226]

Women's visibility in positions of power and authority is key to changing attitudes about their leadership. Role models are particularly critical for paving the way for future generations of women leaders.

In Liberia, the all-female Indian police contingent of the UN Peacekeeping force helped modify perceptions among Liberian women, as they saw that women could be in charge of policing and that the security sector could offer attractive professional opportunities.[227] The Liberian police academy began to recruit and train more women, raising women's representation

in Liberia's national police force from 6 to 17 percent between 2007 and 2016.

Creating gender caucuses

Another promising practice is the convening of gender caucuses, which bring women and men together across the political spectrum, such as the Equal Opportunities Caucus in Ukraine[228] and the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Congressional Caucus in the United States. The bipartisan WPS Congressional Caucus seeks to ensure that the WPS goals are considered national security and foreign policy priorities.[229]

Mauritius, the highest ranking Sub-Saharan African country on the Women, Peace, and Security Index, launched a Parliamentary Gender Caucus in 2017 and established 48 Gender Focal Points in all ministries.[230] In 2018, the Gender Caucus held workshops with counterparts in Rwanda and Uganda to learn about how more successful caucuses in the region operate and how strategic government plans can be monitored using appropriate indicators. The caucus also conducted a gender audit of the civil service in early 2018.

Building capacity for women to vote and run for office

Some civil society organizations and multilateral organizations offer mentorship and skill-building opportunities for women to run for office, build subject-matter expertise, and assert political authority. For example, the Tunisian organization Aswat Nissa, led by Ikram Ben Said, trains female candidates to run for elected office and organizes countrywide programs encouraging women to vote.[231] Some Aswat Nissa participants were subsequently elected, among them Ichrak Rhouma, who was voted onto the Council of Sidi Hassine, in Tunis. Rhouma has attributed her deeper knowledge of women's rights and topics such as gender-sensitive budgeting to Aswat Nissa.[232] Political organizing efforts by women's groups and decentralization reforms requiring horizontal and vertical gender parity[233] brought women's participation in Tunisia's 2018 municipal elections close to parity.[234]

Using digital technologies to organize

Civil society organizations are mobilizing to address injustice and respond to the pandemic using digital technology. Lever 5 outlines multiple innovations and opportunities using social media and new digital platforms; here we highlight the ingenuity of local organizations in the face of adversity. For example, in Nigeria, the program Education as a Vaccine developed a mobile phone app to increase access to accurate health and service information and connect survivors of violence to services. It organized a community advocacy campaign to ensure that essential gender-based violence services were available.[235] Similarly, in India, the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) leveraged online networks to distribute information related to COVID-19 (box 2.2).

"In these difficult times, real leadership comes in. And the example of such people—of such leadership—is the locomotive to push events further. I think we need to use these leadership examples for encouraging women to take leadership roles."
—Dalia Grybauskaitė, Former President of Lithuania

Advancing peace and security through collective organization

"If you really want to work on containing contagious diseases in the future, then women's leadership in the health sector at all levels and in all aspects has to be recognized now."
—Reema Nanavaty, Head of Self-Employed Women's Association of India

Women's civil society organizations and social movements help build strong institutions and foster accountability and transparency, including in places where democracy has been repressed and during transitions following violent conflict or crisis. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo during the Ebola outbreak, the Collectif des Associations Feminines, a network of women's groups, led an intensive information campaign about the disease and its vaccine, reaching out to more than 13,000 people in markets, churches, and door-to-door visits in the city of Beni.[236]

Creating democratic spaces for transformative change

In some cases where women have been excluded from formal political processes, women's movements have

"If women are not really engaged in the fight, there won't be change."
—Chouchou Namegabe, Founder and CEO of ANZAFRIKA

BOX 2.2

The Self-Employed Women's Association's use of digital platforms to inform and organize women during COVID-19

The Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA), a trade union in India advocating for low-income, self-employed women, is using digital platforms like WhatsApp to distribute information related to COVID-19 to hundreds of thousands of women. Grassroots leaders developed e-modules, videos, and voice message trainings on the health effects of the virus, in addition to live broadcasts accessible by mobile phone outlining precautions. Local women were able to respond, creating a two-way communication system between health experts and communities.

SEWA has also trained women to use mobile phones as an entrepreneurial platform. In the face of worsening food scarcity during the pandemic, women are preparing food kits with recipes, packaged snacks, and baked goods that households and hospitality businesses can order online. This helps sustain income for these women and their families during the pandemic. SEWA's Rural Commodities Distribution Network (RUDI) increased procurement of produce from small-scale famers and partnered with delivery apps to expand service in urban areas in tandem with door-to-door delivery by women in rural areas. RUDI was launched in partnership with the Vodafone Foundation as a way to strengthen food supply chains while empowering a network of 4,400 saleswomen who collectively reach 1 million customers across 3,000 villages.[1]

1. Vodafone Foundation 2020.
Source: Interview with Reema Nanavaty, leader of SEWA (www.sewa.org).

led mass action campaigns and sit-ins. In the 2019 protests against corruption, poor governance, and economic deterioration in Lebanon, women played key roles in leading peace marches to amplify messages on nonviolence and transformative change while advocating for women's rights and political participation.[237] These campaigns have resulted in growing support from Lebanese government officials for women's demands for increased representation in governance bodies and equal nationality rights, as women are currently not permitted to pass citizenship onto their spouse and children in the same way that men are. Political parties have put forward more women leaders to speak on behalf of their parties.

During the 2019 revolution in Sudan that ousted President Omar al-Bashir, women of all ages and backgrounds demonstrated for accountability, justice, and regime change against al-Bashir's nearly 30-year rule.[238] Women—like Alaa Salah, who led a crowd of protesters in singing—were at the frontline of the revolution and demonstrated not only for political change but also against patriarchy in both the public and private spheres. Women's groups also launched "The time has come" campaign to denounce sexism and al-Bashir's Public Order law that regulated what women could wear, whom they spoke to, and what job they could hold. Around 50,000 women were sanctioned for violating this law annually, with sanctions including arrests and flogging. The campaign led to the revocation of the Public Order Law by the transitional government.[239] Even as women remain largely excluded from committees in the transition government,[240] in 2019, Sudan appointed its first female foreign minister, Asmaa Abdallah.[241]

"Gender inequality is a power problem. Dealing with it requires political action by an organized citizenry."
—Ikram Ben Said, Founder of Aswat Nissa, Tunisia

Linking leaders and grassroots organizations

Strong relationships between women political leaders and women's grassroots organizations can be mutually beneficial.[242] Women political leaders are well positioned to advocate for women's issues and channel

women's grassroots voices. In turn, women's grassroots organizations build local support for formal political processes and provide information and technical expertise to political leaders, as seen in peace processes in Colombia, the Philippines, and South Sudan:

- In the Colombian process leading to the 2016 peace agreement, the Gender Sub-Commission of Negotiating Parties included women and incorporated a gender perspective in peace negotiations.[243] The sub-commission played a critical role in engaging women's civil society organizations and in adopting 130 gender-related commitments in the peace accord. Women's groups also built public support for the peace talks and worked with women negotiators to incorporate gender issues into the agenda, such as land rights for indigenous women and reparations for victims of sexual and gender-based violence.[244]
- In the Philippines peace process in 2014, which brought an end to decades of civil strife on Mindanao, women participated in both the formal and informal negotiations.[245] Miriam Coronel Ferrer, the first female chief peace negotiator, channeled women's grassroots voices into the formal peace talks.[246] Women's groups also successfully advocated for the adoption of gender provisions in the peace agreement and the establishment of a Civilian Protection Component with 70 percent female membership[247] that monitored the ceasefire and worked to protect civilian communities.[248]
- In South Sudan, the Women's Coalition—comprising 44 women's groups—provided technical support for female participants in the formal peace talks in 2018 and helped to successfully negotiate a 35 percent quota for women in executive bodies.[249]

These examples, from a variety of settings, demonstrate women's important role in advancing peace and security.

Taking action for climate justice

Women and girls are disproportionately vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, particularly in fragile and conflict-affected settings.[250] At the same time, women are advancing climate solutions—as activists, decision-makers, and peacebuilders on the frontlines. Various modes of engagement help build climate resilience, mitigate climate-related security risks, and bring climate justice for women and other marginalized groups.[251] Examples include women's representation and actions in local government, informal grassroots networking and community engagement, and gender mainstreaming in climate policy frameworks.

"Women's meaningful participation is fundamental in peacebuilding. When women actively participate in peace processes, the possibility of achieving sustainable peace is greatly increased."
—Marta Lucía Ramírez, Vice President of Colombia

Women elected officials at the local level have been at the forefront of climate action. They have been mobilizing through networks such as Women4Climate, created by 20 women mayors of the C40 Cities group. Members include the mayor of Paris, Anne Hidalgo, who has directed large-scale investments to reduce carbon emissions, such as promoting tree planting programs, converting urban highways into green spaces and pedestrian zones, and enhancing public transport using green energy. The mayor of Freetown, Sierra Leone, Yvonne Aki-Sawyerr, has also joined the network and is leading Transform Freetown, a three-year city plan focused on achieving inclusive climate adaptation by tackling informal sanitation, mitigating floods, and increasing vegetation cover by 50 percent by 2022.[252]

"Climate justice is a core issue in thinking about how we move forward."
—Mary Robinson, Former President of Ireland

Evidence from tree harvesting practices in Indonesia, Peru, and Tanzania shows that introducing gender quotas to boost women's representation in government increases the likelihood that climate policy interventions will be effective and that the benefits will be shared equally.[253] Amplifying women's diverse voices is critical. Young and indigenous women have led advocacy campaigns and actions to protect the environment.

Empowering grassroots networks and strengthening women's leadership can build resilience to climate change:

- The Mahila Housing SEWA Trust (MHT) has helped 25,000 households across Bangladesh, India, and Nepal increase their resilience to climate change. Initiatives include training women as energy auditors to encourage households to adopt sustainable products and facilitating the formation of a women-led distribution network of green energy and building

"We have to look at young people and make sure that we use young people and women as advocates for change. It's the young generation now that understands climate change and what it will mean to stop their ambitions for a brighter future unless we do something."
—Margot Wallström, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sweden

materials. MHT has conducted some 28,000 energy audits, saving families more than $700,000 annually in electricity costs. Some 1,500 local women have been trained as climate *saathis* (partners), whose job is to communicate information about climate change to communities in the local language.[254] MHT was recognized through a 2019 UN Global Climate Action award for its work empowering low-income women to increase their resilience against climate change.

- The young activist Greta Thunberg inspired an estimated 1.6 million young people across 133 countries to participate in climate protests in March 2019.[255]
- The Association for Indigenous Women and Peoples of Chad led indigenous groups in the 2015 Paris climate negotiations and participated in the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform Facilitative Working Group during the 2018 United Nations Climate Change Conference.[256]
- In El Salvador, women's groups leveraged the World Food Programme's interventions to develop a community fund to assist people in climate-vulnerable regions.[257]
- The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), UN Women, the United Nations Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (UNDPPA), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) supported targeted interventions in the Sudanese state of North Kordofan to increase women's agency in natural resources management and in the prevention and resolution of conflicts. In situations where women are excluded from leadership roles, natural resources can be an entry point for women's engagement in peacebuilding and climate action.[258]

"We need networks of networks, and that is by having support and resources to link networks at the very bottom to the next level up to the next level up."
—Mary Robinson, Former President of Ireland

- After Tropical Cyclone Winston struck Fiji in 2016, women's groups such as the Rakiraki Market Vendors Association led adaptation measures at the community level to diversify sources of income, harvest rainwater, and train market vendors to respond to similar climate-related threats in the future.[259]

By linking top-down and bottom-up approaches to leadership, women's networks and local constituencies confer power and legitimacy to the climate movement.

Lever 5. Harnessing technology

Technological innovation holds promise for empowering women and girls on multiple fronts, in part because technology offers ways to sidestep or leapfrog traditional constraints and structures. This is especially the case for new digital technologies that were largely unavailable at the time of the Beijing Conference.

Technology, though not a panacea given the reality of gender gaps in digital access,[260] has made it possible for women to access resources and platforms in ways that amplify their voices, enhance their economic participation, and strengthen their security.

As digitization expands, ensuring that women are part of this wave will remain central in the struggle for gender equality. The COVID-19 crisis reinforces the importance of closing gender gaps in access to technology, as outlined in part I. Technology is a powerful tool of economic development, but gains can't be maximized until women have equal access.

Amplifying women's voices

Social media can be a force multiplier in campaigns for gender equality, raising awareness at often unprecedented speed with unrivaled reach and giving a voice to women who are traditionally muted in public spaces. Social media can engage younger populations, build broader networks of changemakers, and increase the pressure on political leaders to act. New technologies and digital organizing can give youth a critical platform for civic participation.[261] At the same time, care must be taken to ensure that social media platforms are not used to objectify and harass women politicians and human rights defenders.[262]

The #MeToo movement has been a game changer, shattering the silence around sexual assault by lifting the stigma attached to survivors and overcoming the

obstacles to speaking out. Spreading outward from its origins in the entertainment sector, the hashtag has given women the opportunity to speak out against abusers.[263] Within a year of going viral, "#MeToo" was tweeted more than 19 million times[264] and has inspired a global movement. Widely used in at least 85 countries, #MeToo has been translated into many different languages, including #YoTambien in Spain and Latin America, #BalanceTonPorc in France, and #QuellaVoltaChe in Italy.

In countries where constraints on women's physical mobility muffle their voices, such as Afghanistan, social media provides channels for advocacy. The hashtag "#AfghanWomenWillNotGoBack" has helped unify women's demands to the Taliban for an end to gender-based violence, and #MyRedLine has been used by Afghan women to record video clips sharing their "red lines" for any internal peace agreement.[265]

Enhancing physical security

Apps and other online platforms can increase women's access to justice, expose insecure areas, and deter violence against women. For example, MediCapt, an app developed by Physicians for Human Rights, assists doctors, law enforcement officials, and legal professionals in documenting forensic evidence of sexual violence against women. Evidence from Kenya reveals success in faster and higher quality documentation of assault, increasing the ability to ensure and enforce justice for women.[266]

Mapping technologies can also enhance women's security:

- HarassMap, an Egyptian website, tracks the location of sexual harassment incidents across the country to expose and prevent violence against women.[267]
- SafeCity visually maps cases of sexual assault across major cities in Africa, Asia, Europe, and South America, increasing the information available to women about harassment in public spaces. The aim is to both protect women from future violence and break the silence surrounding abuse.[268]
- Vodafone's TecSOS handsets, which serve 81,000 residents in the United Kingdom, help protect victims of domestic abuse. Pressing a single button on the mobile phones sends an instant alert to law enforcement of the victim's location and has reduced response times by 11 percent since its launch in 2011.[269] TecSOS has also spread to Germany, Ireland, Portugal, and Spain.

Advancing women's economic opportunities and entrepreneurship

Technology is a gateway to new public spaces, markets, and information centers, with enormous potential to advance women's economic activity and participation. Services such as mobile banking, for example, help expand women's financial inclusion.[270] Access to mobile money similarly strengthens women's autonomy in financial decision-making and their ability to securely save income, increasing their overall independence. A GSMA survey in 11 developing countries —including Colombia, Jordan, and Kenya—found that 64 percent of women reported that mobile phones had improved their access to employment and business opportunities.[271]

Mobile cash transfers, more than physical cash transfers, strengthen women's decision-making abilities by enhancing their bargaining power in the home. Women in Niger reported that mobile transfers had increased their mobility, opportunities to sell agricultural products, and flexibility to purchase household goods.[272] Further, mobile phones can connect women farmers to technologies that raise productivity in the long run. The World Bank also found that mobile cash transfers can benefit women's physical security and reduce poverty-related stress that leads to domestic conflict. Other benefits included better nutrition and financial resilience.[273]

If support is designed and implemented in gender-intentional ways, it can do more to ensure that women are not left behind. Recent guidance published by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the World Bank, CGAP, and Women's World Banking outlines the potential gains from digital cash transfers to women during the COVID-19 crisis and offers concrete policy design options to mitigate risks of women's exclusion and maximize positive impacts for women.[274] Key recommendations include pursuing private sector partnerships to subsidize digital access, expanding registration and

"Women working in the informal sector now all have digital money and digital wallets; they are very confidently using those digital wallets for transactions. It's all in her phone, which she's in charge of. If you put technology in the hands of the women, they know how to best make use of it."
—Reema Nanavaty, Head of Self-Employed Women's Association of India

"In the future for women, we need to think digitally about gender issues."
—Laura Alonso, Former Head of the Argentina Anti-Corruption Office

information systems to collect sex-disaggregated data, and providing capacity-building training for women in financial literacy skills.

The growing use of smartphone technology is also benefiting female entrepreneurs, who use online networks to run small businesses.

- Tajirat al-Facebook is an online group used by Sudanese women entrepreneurs and their clients to trade and sell goods. These platforms create an exclusively female virtual space for communication and enable women to work from home without breaching social norms and expectations.[275]
- On a much larger scale, Ant Financial—an affiliate of the Alibaba Group, in partnership with Goldman Sachs and the International Finance Corporation—uses internet-based financing to increase microlending to women entrepreneurs across China, many of whom operate businesses on online platforms such as TaoBao.[276]

Applying new technologies to collect data and inform decision-making

New technologies are being used to collect data on sensitive issues through confidential digital platforms such as mobile phone surveys.[277] Innovative methods to collect and analyze data offer promise in addressing gender inequality globally through evidence-based policies and programming.

- Data mining techniques revealed complex and anomalous patterns of sexual violence in El Salvador in real time and enabled early detection and informed intervention by law enforcement officials.[278]
- In Uganda, UN Global Pulse analyzed digital data to track perceptions about contraceptive use and teenage pregnancy. The study demonstrated the potential for digital data, accessed through platforms like Facebook, to inform development programming and accelerate progress toward the SDGs.[279]

"Women are actually often the biggest drivers as well as the biggest beneficiaries of new business models in the Internet economy."
—Virginia Tan, Co-Founder and President of Lean In China

The COVID-19 crisis has exposed the continuing imperative to focus on closing gender data gaps. Global Health 50/50, an international organization working to advance gender equality in public health, has compiled an online dataset tracking the different health outcomes of COVID-19 for men and women.[280] Such datasets are critical to increasing understanding and informing policy responses to the gendered impacts of pandemics.

* * *

In the 25 years since the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, progress on the agenda has been mixed. Huge deficits persist in women's rights—not least in their economic opportunities, safety in the home, and access to sexual and reproductive healthcare—as well as in their political participation and leadership.

The good news is that states and nonstate actors are using innovative interventions to prevent and respond to intimate partner violence, address disadvantages facing poor and marginalized women, and support the collective action of women and women's organizations, among other goals.

These initiatives are rising to the top of national and international agendas amid the challenges of COVID-19, which has exposed persistent inequalities and highlighted multiple threats to women's lives and livelihoods. The crisis provides an opportunity for a major policy reset. Responding effectively requires informed and inclusive action, as outlined in the way forward in Part III.

PART III

The way forward

Twenty-five years after the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, COVID-19 has exposed deep inequalities but has also created a rare moment of clarity, revealing the vital and integral roles that women play in the home, on the frontlines of service delivery, and in crisis leadership. This confluence of factors presents a unique opportunity to examine critical issues of climate change, racial injustice, and economic disparities that have been ignored for far too long. It allows us to reconfigure how we approach every aspect of social and economic life with renewed energy and commitment to addressing persistent gaps and inequalities.

Meeting commitments to build a more inclusive world that protects the rights of women and girls everywhere cannot be achieved without educating, motivating, and promoting a diverse network of female leaders and male allies in all sectors of society. This will require measures highlighted elsewhere in this report—including building capacity and skills, proactively countering backlash, and leveraging digital platforms to elevate the voices of marginalized women. Nurturing women's leadership through reciprocal mentorship and intergenerational dialogue will build the foundation for future leaders. Creating opportunities for female leadership, from the highest levels of government to

BOX 3.1

Celebrate, cultivate, and advance women's leadership during COVID-19 and beyond

Strengthening women's leadership and meaningful participation in decision-making is at the heart of the gender equality agenda. The COVID-19 pandemic provides a unique opportunity to spotlight women leaders—both at the top and on the frontlines—who are demonstrating that empowering and investing in women is not just a matter of equality, but necessary for societal progress.

Many observers have noted that women-led countries appear to have handled the COVID-19 crisis better than others. As of May 2020, countries with female heads of state had six times fewer confirmed deaths from COVID-19 than countries led by men.[1] The women leaders of Germany, Finland, Iceland, New Zealand, and Norway have demonstrated traits that can be effective during a crisis, including empathy, public accountability, and consensus building. Finnish Prime Minister Sanna Marin—the world's youngest head of state—used social media influencers to spread evidence-based information on managing the pandemic and merged the country's national emergency supply agency with public sector networks as a tool of communication.[2]

From the Ebola crisis to the COVID-19 pandemic, women have also been at the forefront as healthcare workers, community volunteers, and frontline responders. Women are also leading global responses to COVID-19. Former Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and former New Zealand Prime Minister Helen Clark co-chaired an independent World Health Organization panel for pandemic preparedness and response.[3]

Public health crises highlight the leadership contributions women make at all levels, pointing to clear lessons for the way forward. These role models are providing the impetus for re-evaluating traditional masculine notions of leadership. Acknowledging and accelerating the ingenuity of women leaders and frontline workers can challenge entrenched norms on women's political participation and prepare the way for aspiring female leaders to take the helm.

Notes

1. Fioramonti, Coscieme, and Trebeck 2020.
2. Heikkila 2020.
3. AllAfrica 2020.

local communities, shows current and future generations what is possible (box 3.1).

Amplifying women's leadership and meaningful participation in formal and informal peace processes is also critical to building inclusive, sustainable peace. Centering women in peacebuilding in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security on its 20th anniversary, backed by institutional, financial, and legal support systems, will leverage women's contributions to political stability and economic progress for all.

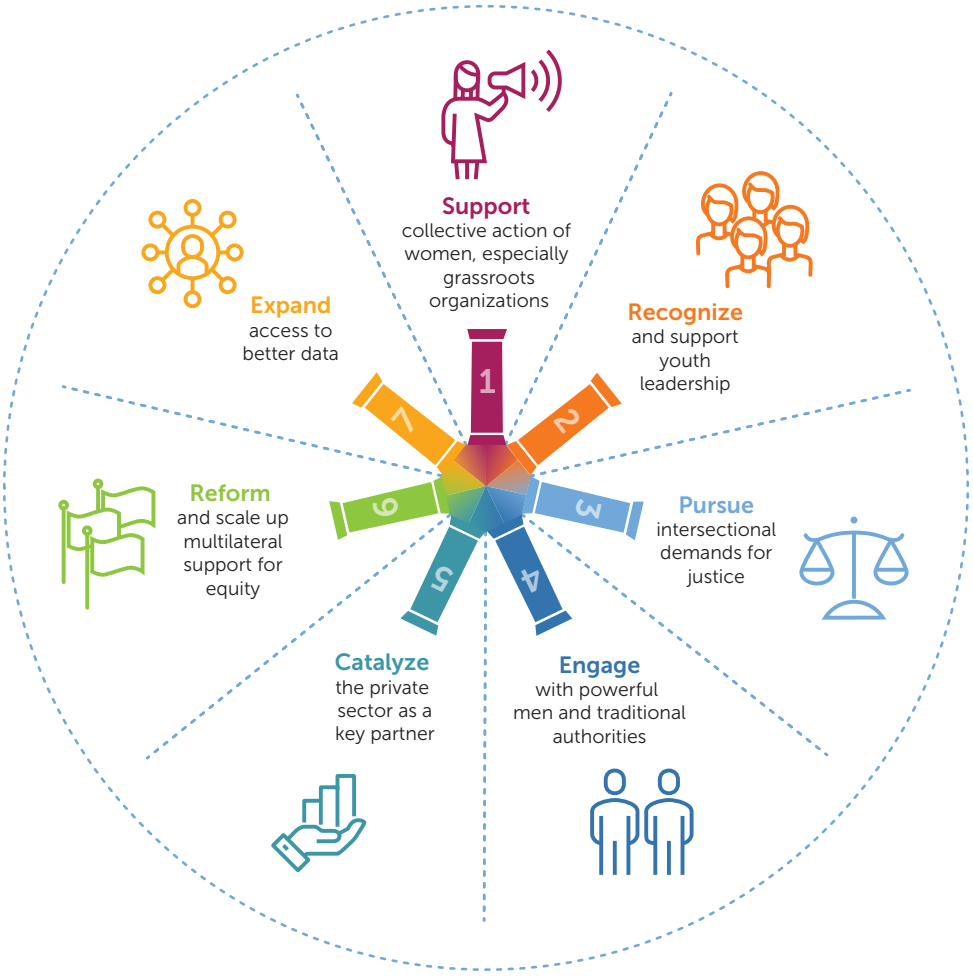
To meet the promise of Beijing, we need to close gaps and ensure equal access. To do that we need to listen to marginalized women, not just to women in the elite, and ensure that their voices are empowered as architects of new policies and frameworks.

This final part of the report recommends a series of seven bold ideas—the seven pillars—to accelerate progress and lays out strategies to build back better in ways that permanently close systemic gaps (figure 13).

1. Support collective action of women, especially grassroots organizations

From the Liberian women's sex strike for peace to the global impact of the #MeToo movement and to Greta Thunberg's youth-led Fridays For Future climate strike, women's collective action has paved the

FIGURE 13 Seven pillars to accelerate progress for women and girls and build back better after COVID-19



Source: Authors.

"We need to get back to community organizing and building women's power to engage in collective action."
—Ikram Ben Said, Founder of Aswat Nissa, Tunisia

way for large-scale societal change.[281] Women and girls at the grassroots—from informal sector workers and human rights activists to community groups and leaders—are also accelerating progress on the ground. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought the energy and resilience of women's civil society leaders into sharp focus, revealing their tireless work in responding to new pandemic-related needs by providing access to emergency aid, healthcare, and legal services.[282]

At the same time, the crisis has threatened the critical work of many local organizations, underscoring the urgent need for resources and support.

Several strategies have emerged as key ways to support grassroots organizations, amplify women's voices at the local level, and mobilize their collective power.

Promote global solidarity, strengthen visibility, and build alliances

Leveraging the support of the international community can drive progress and counter backlash against gender equality. For example, the Group of Friends of Women in Afghanistan—co-chaired by Afghanistan and the United Kingdom—stands as a demonstration of international solidarity and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development commitment to "protect and uphold the human rights of the women of Afghanistan."[283] By monitoring and amplifying the work of local activists on the global stage, these alliances can elevate the voices of women's networks and catalyze collective action at grassroots levels.

Catalyze local women's engagement at national, local, and international levels

The talent and expertise of people at the local level are critical to accelerating change. Many grassroots organizations have a unique understanding of their communities' needs and priorities yet lack the ability to engage as, and with, decision-makers at the highest levels. Recognizing the value of local insights and ensuring that local women leaders are centrally involved in decision-making processes—including crisis responses, peace negotiations, development programs, and resource allocations—are linchpins in the broader movement for gender equality.

"It's critical to have people who work on the ground with the most vulnerable and marginalized communities at the policy decision tables, because they will tell you who has access to the laws of the land. We must always ask ourselves what will be the impact of this conversation outside of these sanitized walls?"
—Trisha Shetty, Founder and CEO of SheSays, India

Lessons from the Ebola outbreak and earlier public health crises reveal that initial interventions tend to prioritize the medical response.[284] Recovery efforts need to take a comprehensive approach that also addresses livelihoods and broader needs, based on ongoing dialogue and feedback from diverse local voices. This will ensure that needs are met without exacerbating existing gaps or creating new ones.[285]

Recent high-level political declarations from UN Women, the United Nations Economic and Social Council, and the UN Secretary-General recognize the importance of supporting the capacities of local women's groups by linking local leaders with institutional processes at the national and international levels.[286] Strategies include:

- Harnessing technology and new modes of communication to close the gender digital divide and accelerate community-based innovations.
- Investing in programs that provide marginalized women with skills training, mentoring, access to networks and markets, and financial resources.
- Engaging women in development projects and programs, including as an integral part of COVID-19 response and recovery efforts, while enabling a safe environment for women's political and economic participation.
- Matching commitments to gender equality with adequate financial support to women's networks—without imposing external agendas.

2. Recognize and support youth leadership

Young people are leading the battle for equality in many areas and have enormous potential to inspire positive change. Yet many young people are deprived of opportunities to work and to learn, and their energy and creativity remain underused. Bridging generational divides and actively engaging youth as partners are key to creating a broad base for advancing gender equality. COVID-19 presents an opportunity to connect younger

generations with global leaders through virtual forums and digital technologies.

Prioritizing investments in young people should be at the forefront of efforts to accelerate long-needed change. National and global actors need to actively involve youth in gender-responsive initiatives and provide space in decision-making at the highest levels. This includes engaging youth in the design, implementation, and monitoring of national programs; establishing youth advisory groups; consulting youth on policy and law making; and investing in local programs that enhance civic engagement. Examples include such multilateral initiatives as UNDP's Youth Global Programme for Sustainable Development and Peace (Youth-GPS) and UN Women's Youth and Gender Equality Strategy and its LEAPs[287] framework.[288, 289]

Youth-based programming—particularly in vulnerable and marginalized communities—can help ensure that the priorities, contributions, and aspirations of young people are reflected throughout all levels of decision-making.[290] While today's youth have unprecedented technological capacities, participation needs to be extended to rural and underserved areas to democratize digital access and enable broad participation.[291] Ensuring that girls have equal access to digital resources is key to maximizing success.

Young people have developed new models for social movements, mobilizing unprecedented numbers of students and activists across the globe to demand swift action on climate and racial justice. Youth representatives from over 140 countries came together at the 2019 UN Youth Climate Summit to demand that national leaders advance inclusive, science-based policies on the global stage.[292] Young people living in frontline communities, especially marginalized youth, know the urgency of making their voices heard.

3. Pursue intersectional demands for justice

Women's equality and empowerment are integral to all dimensions of inclusive and sustainable development, as reflected in the SDGs. Prioritizing an intersectional approach to gender equality that recognizes the diverse identities and challenges defining women's experiences—from race and ethnicity to sexual orientation, poverty status, and rural and urban livelihoods—will drive progress across the global agenda.

Recent surges in intersectional social movements have exposed the overlapping systems of disadvantage that differentially affect diverse groups of women. These movements demonstrate the need to tear down silos and reveal how the ongoing push for gender equality is inseparable from the broader struggles for climate protection, racial justice, and economic empowerment.

"What is important is to hear their voice and to support them and to make them feel that they have ownership of their own activities and their own challenges and demands."
—Leila Alikarami, Lawyer and Human Rights Advocate, Iran

Current protests against systemic racism and police brutality in the United States—and around the world—also shed light on the importance of bringing members of indigenous communities and people of color in as leaders and changemakers in the gender equality movement.[293] Their experiences can enrich and strengthen diverse gender constituencies, mobilizing stakeholders to catalyze progress across a broad range of issues.

Many women's organizations and constituencies are building on this awareness and addressing the issues of race, equity, and environmental justice that are at the nexus of the gender equality agenda.

Given the broad scale and complexities of the challenges, building multilevel partnerships across diverse constituencies will be crucial for sustaining and accelerating progress toward gender equality. Civil society, the private sector, and governments must join together in multi-stakeholder coalitions to leverage investments and align policy agendas.

National Climate Change Gender Action Plans—such as those in Jordan and Mozambique—set strong examples of prioritizing women's leadership in climate change mitigation, adaptation, and post-COVID-19 resilience-building efforts.[294] Private donors and stakeholders can support similar efforts by using an intersectional gender lens to identify targeted financing for local initiatives and erase the "green divide" in jobs and technical expertise.

Rebuilding after COVID-19 presents an opportunity to accelerate a paradigm shift across industries,

"They don't want to be told that they're going to be taking the baton because they say: 'We have the baton in our hands. We want to co-lead and we want every step of the way to be intergenerational.'"
—Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director of UN Women

"It's the minority ethnic communities that are suffering disproportionately from the virus—the intersection of poverty, gender, race, being migrants, being indigenous, having disabilities, being a young girl out of school who'd be forced into child marriage. It's all very visible and worn out. And we can only have a recovery that addresses that."
—Mary Robinson, Former President of Ireland

economies, and political societies in thinking about social and economic inequities. This involves reaching across sectors, populations, and socioeconomic strata to form networks motivated by a shared commitment to the betterment of women and girls everywhere. Failures to respond to intersectional challenges during the recovery period will perpetuate deep inequalities that obstruct access to equal opportunities in social, political, and economic spaces. As the evidence consistently shows, narrowing the gaps yields gains for all of society.

"Women's rights are so easily siloed because they're women's rights. But if they were seen as social outcomes for the good of everything, there would be a lot more willingness to fund them."
—Virginia Tan, Co-Founder and President of Lean In China

4. Engage with powerful men and traditional authorities

Women cannot achieve gender equality on their own. The movement toward equal participation and full empowerment of women and girls requires the support of male champions, as men still occupy most positions of power. Enlisting support from powerful men—from the highest echelons to the local and household levels—can accelerate progress toward equality by weakening resistance to change and promoting norms of power sharing between men and women.

Men need to advocate publicly for gender equality from their positions of power in global corporations, political parties, and peace negotiations. This advocacy requires challenging notions of masculinity, publicly condemning violence against women, and questioning the power dynamics that prevent women's full political, social, and economic inclusion.

"Men need to champion this agenda. They need to be vocal about it. And they need to understand it's not just because of you and your daughter or your spouse or your family." –Natalia Kanem, Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund

Coalitions like Male Champions of Change recognize that "Men invented the system. Men largely run the system. Men need to change the system."[295] Male leaders can be galvanized to alter the conditions and cultures that prevent women from thriving while making clear that advancing gender equality yields universal, absolute gains across society.

Religious leaders, who shape community values, must become allies and agents of change. The notion of "preserving culture and values" in religious traditions is too often used to justify practices that harm women and girls, such as violence against women, male dominance in household decision-making, and restrictions on access to reproductive healthcare. When religious leaders use their platform to champion women's rights they can set an example and inform communities on the congruity between faith and rights, ultimately changing harmful norms.

Engagement with traditional authorities at grassroots and national levels is a mutually reinforcing process: enlisting local leaders in the fight for equality requires systemic reinforcement from national institutions, which in turn depends on community actors to elicit support for change.

5. Catalyze the private sector as a key partner

The private sector controls the bulk of activity in most economies. Large firms and multinational corporations have enormous power and access to vast resources that can be used to accelerate—or impede—women's progress. In the workplace, private companies can set an example of what equality looks like in practice, ultimately influencing social norms as well.

Women's leadership in the private sector is an important channel to advancement—and can lead to greater profitability for companies and higher workplace ratings by employees.[296] The goal is not to tokenize women appointees to high-level roles, but rather to build a professional environment that is conducive to equal opportunities for men and women. For the business community, SDG 17 on revitalizing the global partnership for sustainable development is a call to engage in multisector collaborations for the public good.[297] The

private sector can commit to and act on gender-equality principles of operation and accountability in many different ways. The following examples outline promising approaches from both the UN and the private sector to accelerate progress:

- The UN Global Compact calls for companies to align their strategies and operations with universal principles of human rights, labor, environment, and anticorruption. Some 12,000 companies from more than 160 countries have signed onto the compact.[298] Target Gender Equality, an accelerator program for participating companies, includes corporate targets for women's representation and leadership.[299]
- UN Women's Global Innovation Coalition for Change, a 27-member multi-stakeholder alliance, seeks to remove barriers and accelerate women's empowerment at an industry-wide level.[300] UN Women's Private Sector Accountability Framework, a blueprint for corporations on transparency, covers standards on pay, equal treatment, and upward mobility[301] and enables companies' self-assessment of compliance with the seven UN Women's Empowerment Principles.[302]
- A growing number of businesses have adopted environmental, social, and governance criteria to support sustainability and improve ethical impacts over the long term. The governance component can include gender diversity in management and on boards and support policies on parental leave and equal pay. The environmental, social, and governance criteria are a valuable tool for assessing a company's practices, including those related to gender equality.[303]
- The EDGE (Economic Dividends for Gender Equality) Certification Foundation offers the first standardized methodology for assessing and certifying compliance with workplace gender equality criteria. Launched in 2011 at the World Economic Forum, EDGE certifications are now used across 24 industries in 37 countries.[304]
- Kate Spade & Company launched Abahizi Dushyigikirane (ADC), which produces a line of handbags for the company in Rwanda while empowering local women. ADC has created stable employment opportunities and skills training for over 150 women in the village of Masoro, boosting the women's financial autonomy and psychological and physical well-being.[305]

The private sector, particularly venture capital, can be a powerful force in removing barriers and driving progress for women's entrepreneurship by providing platforms and resources that are otherwise inaccessible to women. Teja Ventures, the first venture capital fund in Asia to apply a gender lens to its initiatives, invests in technology and business models that support women in the investment value chain—from founders to consumers, suppliers, and vendors—and targets women-led businesses that aim to tap women's leadership potential and promote their financial inclusion.[306]

"We do know that the private sector has to be at the table. And there's so much that they can do to help support progress on gender equality."
—Carolyn Tastad, Group President for North America at Procter & Gamble

"We need to establish a new coalition. We need civil society, no doubt, and young women's representation. And we need the private sector."
—Susana Malcorra, Former Foreign Minister of Argentina

Communication media—advertising, film, social, print, streaming—have potent influence on how women are portrayed, often depicting them in stereotypical roles,[307] as discussed earlier. The private sector can leverage the media for change, especially through paid advertising. Reports by the United Kingdom's Advertising Standards Authority, for example, led to the development of new advertising standards that avoid gender stereotypes linked to real-world harm and inequality.[308] The Unstereotype Alliance, convened by UN Women, aims to eradicate harmful gender-based stereotypes in all media and advertising content.[309] Across all platforms, leveraging the media's influence is critical in defining and shifting the narrative on gender equality.

"I'd really like to make a bridge between the media and business and companies. And to make a kind of incentive to encourage them to advance gender equality."
—Chouchou Namegabe, Founder and CEO of ANZAFRIKA

6. Reform and scale up multilateral support for equity

The world is in critical need of effective multilateralism and cross-border cooperation. Nothing demonstrates

"We can only solve global problems with global agreements."
—Dalia Grybauskaitė, Former President of Lithuania

this need more strongly than the lack of a coordinated global response to the threats to human life, the global economy, and peace and security posed by COVID-19. As the UN Secretary-General warned: "The world is facing an unprecedented test, and this is our moment of truth."[310]

COVID-19 threatens global progress on human rights and economic development and adds to the multiple challenges that transcend national borders—alongside gender inequality, climate change, displaced populations, global poverty, and more. A primary goal of international institutions—most notably the UN system and the international financial institutions—is to mitigate and manage global challenges and promote cooperation.

Addressing gender inequality is not the task of a particular organization or agency but rather requires deliberate support from all multilateral actors. Here we identify promising ways to promote and accelerate multilateral commitments.

The United Nations should take the lead in developing a comprehensive gender equality framework and ensuring robust implementation of policies and practices

The United Nations has identified women's rights and gender equality as a priority, yet these commitments are not reflected in much of its decision-making. Lagging progress on the Women, Peace and Security Agenda illustrates the tremendous gulf between rhetoric and reality. Twenty years after Resolution 1325 was adopted, there are very few women in UN leadership and management positions—women make up just 2 percent of mediators, fewer than 5 percent of military contingents, and slightly more than 10 percent of peacekeepers.[311]

The United Nations must do better. It needs to be a role model in implementing gender parity targets by increasing the numbers of women in leadership and senior management positions, promoting women's recruitment and retention, and ensuring that operations observe the highest standards of behavior to create a conducive environment for participation.[312]

"If there is one opportunity out of COVID it is to put in value what Agenda 2030 means."
—Susana Malcorra, Former Foreign Minister of Argentina

Women's perspectives and participation need to be fully integrated throughout the work of the United Nations, rather than confined to the silo of "women's issues." To enable more strategic and effective multilateralism, gender perspectives and gender equality need to advance from the margins to the center of the arena of decision-making across all policies, programs, and projects.

International financial institutions should promote and accelerate gender equality more strongly

The World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), along with the regional development banks, need to work harder to accelerate women's advancement.

Since 2011, for example, the IMF has been led by women who have spotlighted women's inclusion in loan programs and country recommendations.[313] Christine Lagarde, during her time as managing director of the IMF (2011–19), made the "inclusive economy" a central tenet of her leadership.[314] The IMF used its global platform to disseminate studies demonstrating that women's economic participation is a powerful driver of growth and highlighting the importance of removing legal obstacles to women's participation in the labor market.[315] Lagarde's successor, Kristalina Georgieva, vowed to fight for greater gender equality at the IMF and around the world, arguing that the IMF plays a critical role in underscoring the importance of female labor force participation and equity at all levels.[316]

These leaders set a high standard by placing gender equality at the core of international development. But despite these commitments, a key critique of the IMF, the World Bank, and other international financial institutions is that the economic reforms they support fail to address the structural causes of inequality, which are rooted in perceptions and uneven access to rights.[317] Investments and projects have often failed to translate commitments into action, and critics have argued that women's rights and gender equality have been undermined as a result.[318]

Greater accountability is needed to ensure that international financial institutions bridge these critical gaps in implementation and accelerate progress on their gender commitments. Organizations like Gender

Action are working to hold these institutions accountable, collaborating with civil society monitors and local community groups to ensure that attention to women's rights and gender justice is integrated into all areas of development finance.[319]

Achieving gender equality is a multidimensional process. Especially in the time of COVID-19, international financial institutions must collaborate with the World Health Organization, other UN agencies, and bilateral partners to ensure that the SDGs are fully integrated into recovery efforts.[320] The economic, social, and political advancement of women are interdependent processes that must be championed together, a call that cannot be answered without multilateral support.

Multilateral actors should galvanize collective action on global crises

The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic reinforce the importance of investing in public goods such as universal healthcare, education, and strong social safety nets. The United Nations, international financial institutions, and other multilateral actors must pave the way for a more equitable and resilient future by spearheading collective action that matches the scale of the crises.

Multilateral actors are vital in fostering gender-responsive approaches to climate action and measuring progress in dealing with the gender dimensions of climate risks across related policy frameworks on gender equality, climate change, and women, peace, and security. As outlined in the 2020 Joint UNEP, UN Women, UNDPPA, and UNDP report *Gender, Climate and Security: Sustaining Inclusive Peace on the Frontlines of Climate Change,* priority actions include:[321]

- Increasing targeted financing by investing in programming that uses sustainable resources, capitalizes on women's peacebuilding activities, and supports women's leadership in addressing climate-related security risks.
- Disseminating information on good practices and lessons learned.
- Developing a multidimensional indicator framework to track progress at the intersections of climate-related risks and gender equality.

Building back better will require strong multilateral commitments and cooperation among governments, international institutions, multinational corporations, NGOs, and civil society. International agreement on the SDGs, the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and the crises created by COVID-19 should generate the impetus for action. Multilateral agencies need to recommit to the frameworks they created and then deliver on their commitments. Marginalized voices need to resonate throughout international institutions to ensure inclusive efforts. In sum, global challenges demand global solutions.

"We need to see more gender mainstreaming in climate action plans."
—Patricia Espinosa, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

7. Expand access to better data

Last but not least, accurately tracking progress against the Beijing Platform and SDG commitments requires sex-disaggregated data. The COVID-19 crisis has exposed both the gaps and the importance of sex-disaggregated data—from the health impacts to domestic violence, job losses, and social protection coverage.[322] Even upper-middle and high-income countries, such as Brazil and the United States, have struggled to report COVID-19 infection rates by sex. Global Health 50/50 has revealed that 23 of 106 countries surveyed do not have sex-disaggregated data on the impacts of the virus. This includes countries with some of the highest numbers of COVID-19 cases, such as Russia, Turkey, and the United Arab Emirates.[323]

In addition to sex-disaggregation, data need to be broken down by race, indigenous status, poverty level, and other demographic characteristics in order to address the intersectional challenges facing women. For example, UN Women and World Bank estimates of people living in extreme poverty show that poverty rates vary greatly by sex, age, and marital status. This highlights the importance of intersectional data in understanding the profile of the poor and reveals a key policy implication: eradicating poverty will require attention to the multitude of vulnerabilities affecting women.[324]

While governments and multinational institutions have made great headway on improving data since

"The capacity for women's groups, for democratic groups, for culture norm-shifting groups to create real action will come more and more from data."
—Judith Rodin, Former President of The Rockefeller Foundation

"If women have access to data, they would start using that data for their future planning and implementation."
—Reema Nanavaty, Head of Self-Employed Women's Association of India

1995, much work is still needed to expand the availability, quality, and coverage of sex-disaggregated data worldwide. Without more and better gender-specific data, monitoring the implementation of the gender equality agenda will fall short, and marginalized groups risk being overlooked. Remedying these data deficits is critical to building back better and ensuring proper implementation of gender-sensitive policies addressing the disproportionate effects of crises such as COVID-19 on women and girls. Without adequate data, blind spots in policymaking will persist, exacerbating gender inequalities.

UN Women has developed guidance for rapid gender assessment surveys on the impacts of COVID-19 for governments and other organizations seeking to integrate the pandemic's gendered effects into their response.[325] These guidelines are part of the Women Count hub—a collaboration between UN Women, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and several governments—which seeks a radical shift in how gender statistics are used, created, and promoted. The strategy has three major prongs:

1. Promoting a supportive policy environment to address institutional and financial constraints and to strengthen policies and practices governing the production and use of gender statistics.
2. Supporting efforts to improve the steady production of gender statistics, including building the technical capacity of national statistical systems and providing financial support to improve data collection for better monitoring of the SDGs.
3. Improving access to data to inform policy advocacy through solutions such as open access, dissemination tools, and user–producer dialogue, to enable data users to make better use of gender statistics in policy, programs, and advocacy.

We have much to learn from good practices around the world, supported by organizations like UN Women, Data2x, and Global Health 50/50. At the national level, Sweden now requires all government agencies to publish annual reports that include sex-disaggregated statistics in order to promote accountability and make gender equality visible across society. Israel, Norway, and Spain have also mandated the regular collection of sex-disaggregated data.[326] However, only 13 percent of countries have dedicated funding for producing gender statistics.[327]

Sex-disaggregated data capturing intersectional cleavages is a pre-requisite for fulfilling the Beijing commitments and advancing toward gender equality. These data are key to exposing gaps, particularly among marginalized groups, and informing policies to reduce gender disparities. International organizations, national governments, and local leaders need to commit to collecting sex-specific data to ensure that no woman is left behind.

* * *

These seven pillars outline a strategy for realizing the current opportunities to build back better, inspired by the spirit of the Beijing Platform and the SDGs. As emphasized throughout, the path to gender equality faces serious obstacles, necessitating a multipronged response and reliance on networks.

Across every sphere, the COVID-19 pandemic is exposing the disparities and inequalities that persist for women and girls, along with massive racial and economic injustice.

Women are leading local and global efforts to build a more inclusive and sustainable society for all. We stand today amid unprecedented global shifts that could redefine the ways that we live and work together. Business as usual will not bring progress. This moment demands transformation, innovation, and bold steps to galvanize cross-cutting partnerships to accelerate change.

Notes

1. UN Women 2016b.
2. Interviews with global women leaders and Generation Equality leaders were conducted by GIWPS and The Rockefeller Foundation in the summer of 2020.
3. United Nations Secretary-General 2016.
4. UN ECOSOC 2019.
5. MenCare n.d.
6. Population Media Center n.d.
7. Population Media Center n.d.
8. GREVIO 2019.
9. UNDP 2020, p. 15.
10. VicHealth 2018.
11. Beaman et al. 2012.
12. C40 Cities 2018.
13. Association des Femmes Peules Autochtones du Tchad 2018; Haynes 2019.
14. Safecity 2020.
15. GSMA 2015.
16. Guterres 2020.
17. Interviews with global women leaders and Generation Equality leaders were conducted by GIWPS and The Rockefeller Foundation in the summer of 2020.
18. UN Secretary-General 2019b.
19. OECD 2020b.
20. UN Women 2016b.
21. UN Secretary-General 2019b.
22. INFORM 2020.
23. Klugman, Dahl, and Zhou 2020.
24. All regional and global averages are population weighted.
25. World Bank 2012.
26. Woetzel et al. 2015.
27. Thévenon et al. 2015.
28. Long and Van Dam 2020; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2020.
29. Oxfam, Promundo-US, and MenCare 2020.
30. Klugman and Mukhtarova 2020.
31. UN Women 2015a.
32. Charmes 2015. The estimates cover 63 countries with 69 percent of the world's adult population.
33. UNDP Human Development Report 2016, Chapter 3.
34. UN Women 2020a.
35. Care International and International Rescue Committee 2020.
36. Care International and International Rescue Committee 2020.
37. EU Commission 2019.
38. UDESA 2015.
39. UDESA 2015.
40. ILO 2019a.
41. Giannini 2020.
42. Giannini 2020.
43. UNESCO 2020.
44. Fry and Lei 2020.
45. UNHCR 2020.
46. CGD 2020.
47. ILO 2019b.
48. UN Women 2020a.
49. UN Women 2020a.
50. OECD 2020b.
51. Alon et al. 2020, pp. 7–10.
52. World Bank 2020a.
53. UN Women 2020c.
54. UN Women et al. 2020.
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60. Klugman et al. 2014.
61. Kaufman 2020.
62. Elston et al. 2020.
63. Roberton et al. 2020.
64. O'Neill 2020.
65. Gharib 2020.
66. GIWPS and PRIO 2019.
67. Dayal and Christien 2020.
68. Christien 2020.
69. Christien 2020.
70. Dayal and Christien 2020.
71. Dayal and Christien 2020.
72. Dayal 2018.
73. UN Environment n.d.
74. UN Environment, UN Women, and UNDP 2020.
75. UN ECOSOC 2019.
76. Alam 2019.
77. UNFCCC 2019a.
78. UNFCCC 2019a.
79. UNFCCC 2019a.
80. UNFCCC 2019a.
81. Verveer and Azzarelli 2015.
82. Huvé 2020.
83. WHO 2020.
84. UN Women 2020b.
85. Peterman et al. 2020.
86. Youssef and Yerkes 2020.
87. Klugman et al. 2014.
88. FRA 2014.
89. UN Women 2020a, p. 17.
90. Kuehnast and Robertson 2018.
91. United Nations Secretary-General 2016.
92. UN ECOSOC 2019.
93. UNDP 2020.
94. Quek 2019.
95. Tankard and Paluck 2016.
96. Ortiz-Ospina and Tzvetkova 2017.
97. UNDESA 2015.
98. World Bank 2020a.
99. Almqvist and Duvander 2014.
100. Huerta et al. 2014.
101. OECD 2019.
102. Patnaik forthcoming.
103. MenCare n.d.
104. Doyle et al. 2018.
105. Berg 2015.
106. Cabrera, Shannon, and Tamis-LeMonda 2007.
107. Ricardo 2014.
108. Plantin, Olukoya, and Ny 2011.
109. Alon et al. 2020.
110. Alon et al. 2020.
111. World Bank 2020a.
112. Kabir and Klugman 2019.
113. Bessen et al. 2020.
114. Rubery 2016.
115. UN ECOSOC 2019.
116. Aumayr-Pintar 2018.
117. Bennedsen et al. 2019.
118. Aumayr-Pintar 2018.
119. ILO 2019c.
120. Intel Newsroom 2019.
121. World Bank 2020a.
122. World Bank 2020a.
123. Quek and Crawford 2019.
124. Campos et al. 2015.
125. World Bank 2019.
126. Verveer and Azzarelli 2015.
127. UNESCO 2017.
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131. Klugman et al. 2014.
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133. Klugman et al. 2014, p. 41.
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138. Population Media Center 2018.
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148. Chang et al. 2020.
149. Özler et al. 2020.
150. Stark et al. 2018.
151. World Bank 2016.

152. GIWPS 2016.
153. Sperling, Winthrop, and Kwauk 2016.
154. Benhassine et al. 2015.
155. Girls Not Brides 2018.
156. Wodon et al. 2017.
157. Verveer and Azzarelli 2015.
158. Girls Not Brides 2018.
159. CAMFED 2016.
160. CAMFED 2019.
161. Population Council n.d.
162. Guglielmi and Jones 2019.
163. World Bank 2020a.
164. Begum 2018.
165. Klugman and Li 2019.
166. GREVIO 2019.
167. Government of Sweden 2016.
168. GREVIO 2019.
169. European Institute for Gender Equality n.d.
170. Molin and Lifvin 2019.
171. Kavanaugh, Sviatschi, and Trako 2019.
172. Amaral, Bhalotra, and Prakash 2018.
173. Karim 2019.
174. Ansorg and Haastrup 2018.
175. Campos et al. 2015, p. 4.
176. Plan International Canada and Promundo-US 2020, p. 4.
177. Cislaghi 2019.
178. Verveer and Azzarelli 2015.
179. UNICEF 2016.
180. WHO 2020.
181. Tostan 2020.
182. UNFPA and UNICEF 2019
183. SASA! 2020.
184. SASA! 2015.
185. Abramsky et al. 2016; Michaels-Igbokwe et al. 2016.
186. UNDP 2020, p. 15.
187. SASA! 2017, p. 20.
188. UNFPA 2020
189. Bah 2020.
190. Jah et al. 2014.
191. Green, Wilke, and Cooper 2020.
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196. Cislaghi 2019.
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208. Albright 2020.
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223. Beaman et al. 2012.
224. Kumar Sinha 2018.
225. Beath, Fotini, and Enikolopov 2013.
226. Beath, Fotini, and Enikolopov 2013.
227. Interview with Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, former President of Liberia, June 2020, conducted by GIWPS and The Rockefeller Foundation.
228. National Democratic Institute 2018.
229. Our Secure Future 2020.
230. Mauritius National Assembly 2019.
231. Aswat Nissa 2019.
232. UN Women 2018.
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234. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace 2018.
235. Williams 2020.
236. WHO 2018.
237. UN Women 2019b.

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239. BBC 2019b.
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242. Chang et al. 2015
243. PRIO 2016.
244. Warren et al. 2017
245. Dayal and Christien 2020.
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250. UNEP et al. 2020
251. Kellogg 2020.
252. Kellogg 2020.
253. Cook, Grillos, and Andersson 2019.
254. UNFCCC 2019c.
255. Haynes 2019.
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258. UNEP et al. 2020.
259. UN Women 2017d.
260. OECD 2018.
261. UNDESA 2016.
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272. Aker et al. 2011.
273. World Bank 2020b.
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276. IFC n.d.
277. UN Women 2019a.
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279. Abreu Lopes and Bailur 2018, p. 16.
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281. Inclusive Security 2012.
282. UN Women 2020f.
283. United Nations Secretary-General 2019a.
284. Wiggins et al. 2020.
285. Lough and Holloway 2020.
286. UN Women 2020f; UN ECOSOC 2020.
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289. UN Women 2017b.
290. UNDP 2017.
291. OECD 2018.
292. UN 2019.
293. UN Women 2020e.
294. UNEP et al. 2020.
295. Broderick 2020.
296. IFC 2019.
297. UNDESA 2020.
298. UN 2020a.
299. UN Global Compact 2020.
300. UN Women 2020g.
301. UN Women 2015b.
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307. Verveer and Azzarelli 2015.
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310. UN 2020c.
311. UN Peacekeeping 2020.
312. UN 2020b.
313. Lagarde 2019.
314. Verveer and Azzarelli 2015.
315. Lagarde 2019.
316. Shalal 2019.
317. Bretton Woods Project 2019.
318. Zuckerman 2018.
319. Gender Action 2012.
320. Cliffe 2020.
321. UNEP et al. 2020.
322. Buvinic, Noe, and Swanson 2020.
323. Global Health 5050 2020.
324. UN Women 2017c.
325. UN Women 2020h.
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