



About UN Women

In July 2010, the United Nations General Assembly created [UN Women](#), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women.

In doing so, UN Member States took an historic step in accelerating the Organization's goals on gender equality and the empowerment of women.

The creation of UN Women came about as part of the UN reform agenda, bringing together resources and mandates for greater impact. It will merge and build on the important work of four previously distinct parts of the UN system which focus exclusively on gender equality and women's empowerment:

- [Division for the Advancement of Women](#) (DAW)
- [International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women](#) (INSTRAW)
- [Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women](#) (OSAGI)
- [United Nations Development Fund for Women](#) (UNIFEM)

The main roles of UN Women are:

- To support inter-governmental bodies, such as the Commission on the Status of Women, in their formulation of policies, global standards and norms
- To help Member States to implement these standards, standing ready to provide suitable technical and financial support to those countries that request it and to forge effective partnerships with civil society.
- To hold the UN system accountable for its own commitments on gender equality, including regular monitoring of system-wide progress.

Meeting the Needs of the World's Women

Over many decades, the UN has made significant progress in advancing gender equality, including through landmark agreements such as the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

Gender equality is not only a basic human right, but its achievement has enormous socio-economic ramifications. Empowering women fuels thriving economies, spurring productivity and growth.

Yet gender inequalities remain deeply entrenched in every society. Women lack access to decent work and face occupational segregation and gender wage gaps. They are too often denied access to basic education and health care. Women in all parts of the world suffer violence and discrimination. They are under-represented in political and economic decision-making processes.

For many years, the UN has faced serious challenges in its efforts to promote gender equality globally, including inadequate funding and no single recognized driver to direct UN activities on gender equality issues.

UN Women — which will be operational by January 2011 — has been created to address such challenges. It will be a dynamic and strong champion for women and girls, providing them with a powerful voice at the global, regional and local levels.

Grounded in the vision of equality enshrined in the UN Charter, UN Women will, among other issues, work for the:

- elimination of discrimination against women and girls
- empowerment of women
- achievement of equality between women and men as partners and beneficiaries of development, human rights, humanitarian action and peace and security.