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Gender equality in UNDP

**Annual report of the Administrator on the implementation of the UNDP
gender equality strategy in 2024**

Summary

This report highlights the third year of the UNDP Gender Equality Strategy, 2022-2025. In 2024, initiatives across the six UNDP signature solutions improved women's lives around the world on an unprecedented scale. In 2024 alone, UNDP supported 137 million women in accessing essential services and 139 million women in obtaining financial services – an unprecedented increase from previous years. These efforts have empowered women economically, contributing to poverty alleviation and helping to promote sustainable development globally.

UNDP maintains a steadfast commitment to women's political participation, supporting the participation of 140 million women in elections in 2024, and helping to remove barriers to political participation in 26 countries. In 2024, 17 million women in 45 countries gained access to clean energy, another increase from 2023. UNDP continued to help close gaps in social protection and expand care systems in 16 countries, to enable women's access to the workforce and their political participation. UNDP programmes in 2024 also met pressing immediate needs of women and built resilience, such as through the delivery of life-saving responses to violence against women in more than 40 countries.

External stakeholders regard this as one of the most effective and high-value areas of work for UNDP, according to the evaluation of the UNDP Strategic Plan, 2022-2025 and a brand perception survey of over 380 respondents. Moving forward, UNDP will continue helping countries to lead to a more prosperous and equitable future for women and all members of society.



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I. Introduction

A. Navigating challenges and demonstrating impact

1. The third year of implementing the Gender Equality Strategy unfolded amid multiple crises multiple and rapidly evolving global dynamics. It was a moment for UNDP to assess how to both manage uncertainty and sustain development opportunities. A midterm review of the 2022-2025 corporate strategic plan found that integrated solutions, a core element of the plan, advance the empowerment of women and achieve systemic impacts. Further, investments produce greater development impacts. This Strategy from the start has built on a fundamental understanding that gender equality is among the most important contributions to human and sustainable development that UNDP can make.

2. In 2024, overlapping crises, including conflict, climate change, deepening economic inequalities and polarization, impacted the work of UNDP. Resurging conflicts and worsening inequalities have fanned a sense of unpredictability and insecurity, eroding trust in leaders and institutions as well as social cohesion. Declining development financing and rising debt distress in many developing countries have reduced investments in women's empowerment, exacerbating inequalities and vulnerabilities. Every conflict, humanitarian and development challenge threaten gains. Moreover, the digital divide continues to exclude millions, particularly women and girls in low-income communities, from the benefits of digital transformation.

3. Despite many challenges, UNDP continued to demonstrate that systemic, lasting change is possible through determined action and strategic partnerships. In 2024, UNDP has reinforced its commitment to meet immediate human development needs, redress human rights concerns and trigger structural shifts. Despite shrinking investments in 2024, initiatives across the six UNDP signature solutions improved women's lives on an unprecedented scale, reaching 300 million with enhanced services alone. Increasing sustainability and resilience has emerged by engaging more intensely with local women and communities to assess their needs and solve problems collaboratively.

B. UNDP performance: Key findings and observations

4. **UNDP is on track overall in delivering the Gender Equality Strategy 2022-2025.** For the third year in a row, UNDP maintained high performance against the United Nations System-wide Action Plan (UN-SWAP) 2.0, exceeding or meeting targets on 15 of 16 relevant indicators, up from 14 of 16 in 2021. In 2024, a transition year, UNDP moved towards implementing the UN-SWAP 3.0 and United Nations Gender Equality Acceleration Plan (GEAP).

5. **Gender equality remains a core and high-impact area of the work of UNDP.** This finding is based on the evaluation of the UNDP Strategic Plan, 2022-2025 and a brand perception survey of more than 380 external stakeholders, including foundations, governments, private sector firms, civil society organizations, vertical funds and academia. Approximately 65 per cent of external stakeholders view it as an area of great interest and 89 per cent considered UNDP effective in it.

6. **UNDP makes strong contributions to the growing number of countries adopting integrated care systems.** These tackle longstanding gaps in women's rights and needs as caregivers and care recipients and have a multiplier effect by improving equality between women and men in other areas of life. UNDP supported integrated care systems in 16 countries in 2024, up from 13 in 2023. Inter-agency collaboration and joint advocacy contributed to this success, in line with the United Nations System Policy Paper on Transforming Care Systems.

7. **Nearly 300 million women gained access to services, a game changer in the fight against multidimensional poverty.** UNDP support resulted in 137 million women accessing essential services in 2024, up from 94 million in 2023, and 139 million women obtaining financial services, up from 28 million in 2023. Integrated services support women's economic independence and contribute to breaking cycles of

poverty within communities. UNDP also backed structural reforms in economies to dismantle gender barriers for good, including through fiscal policy and tax system reforms in 28 countries.

8. **UNDP maintains a steadfast commitment to women's political participation amid volatility and backlash.** It supported the participation of 140 million women in elections in 2024, up from 133 million in 2023, and removed barriers to political participation in 26 countries by providing resources, training and advocacy for women to thrive as voters, candidates and leaders.

9. **Insider mediation is effective in overcoming the persistent exclusion of women in peace processes.** UNDP support has brought women mediators into resolving land disputes, clan feuds and violence against women and girls — amplifying their leadership and demonstrating their impact on community resilience and social cohesion. Evaluations indicate that local, locally led solutions are often more effective, therefore, UNDP will continue investing in women peacebuilders and insider mediation programmes.

10. **UNDP has delivered clean energy to tens of millions of women.** In 2024, 17 million women in 45 countries gained access, up from 14 million in 37 countries in 2023. Access to clean energy reduces women's time poverty and accelerates economic empowerment. But further efforts need to challenge structural gender inequalities in green energy systems, across the policy, decision-making, ownership, technical and service provision levels.

11. **UNDP is shifting to more dynamic approaches to our internal architecture.** A robust global gender architecture, comprising a global team and multidisciplinary teams at the country level, is leading the work towards providing equal opportunities for all across UNDP portfolios, and supports an integrated approach across the levels of the organization and the six signature solutions, making UNDP interventions more efficient and impactful.

12. **Comprehensive programmes that empower women require sustained and sufficient resources.** Dismantling deep-seated discrimination and achieving the empowerment of women is happening but at a pace that will require many decades beyond the 2030 target for the Sustainable Development Goals. With long-term funding, UNDP can help accelerate the process through integrated programming that increases women's agency on multiple levels, including the economy, political realm and green transition.

II. UNDP results on six signature solutions

13. With governments as core partners, UNDP follows a contextualized, country-driven approach. National development choices frame country programmes to advance development goals and women's empowerment in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and as envisioned in the quadrennial comprehensive policy review.

Poverty and inequality

14. In 2024, debt servicing, limited tax bases and low domestic resource mobilization constrained fiscal space in lower-income countries, significantly reducing public investments in social services and care work. In response, UNDP expanded support for economic, fiscal and tax policy reforms, as well as strengthened social protection floors and integrated care systems. It intensified efforts to meet women's immediate needs by providing access to essential services, financial support, digital assets and sustainable livelihoods.

15. **Expanding universal social protection and care services.** The global focus on social protection emphasizes integrating resilience to shocks, including from climate change and conflicts. Despite progress, significant gaps remain, with 2 billion women and girls still lacking adequate social protection. In 2024, UNDP assisted 57 countries to improve social protection and care, up from 43 in 2023. These efforts expanded access, enhanced data-driven decision-making and integrated the prevention of violence against women. In Belize, UNDP collaborated with the Government to modify the Domestic Violence Act and gain

Cabinet approval of the National Gender Policy and Action Plan to expand social protection measures that work for all.

16. In Cambodia, UNDP assisted in registering more than 140,000 women-headed households for social protection. A research initiative on the care economy, in collaboration with the Equanomics Global Learning Lab, provided an evidence-based economic rationale for increased investment in care services. The findings are informing recommendations to transform how national policies and budgets recognize, redistribute and support care work.

17. Recognition of the economic value of unpaid care work is growing, with Argentina, Colombia, Panama and the Republic of Korea enacting national care systems laws in 2024. UNDP supported the development and expansion of integrated care systems in 16 countries, up from 13 in 2023. In North Macedonia, it helped to formalize unpaid care work and create flexible employment pathways to improve the economic empowerment and labour market inclusion of marginalized women, including those from Roma populations, with disabilities and located in rural areas.

18. **Economic policies that work for all.** The flagship programme of UNDP, Equanomics, aligns fiscal policy reforms with equality objectives based on examining public revenue and expenditure. In 2024, 28 countries initiated national reforms while also supporting a similar emphasis in local planning and budgeting. Multistakeholder dialogues assist in analyzing discrimination against women in taxes and public expenditures, strengthening institutions and evidence collection, and forging consensus on policy reforms. Partners in Equanomics include the African Tax Administration Forum, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

19. With Lebanon a pioneer, a joint Equanomics and Tax4SDGs team supported the Ministry of Finance to comprehensively review the tax system's differentiated impact on women and men. This led to establishing the Gender Observatory on Taxation, a groundbreaking tool to routinely collect, analyse and disseminate sex-disaggregated data and trends related to correcting gender disparities. UNDP partnered with the Mongolian General Tax Authority and Ministry of Finance on revising personal income tax provisions to support women's labour force participation. Costa Rica integrated the advance of women's rights in nine institutional budgets and strengthened the capacities of 24 institutions in 2024.

20. UNDP helped countries leverage and align finance to the empowerment of women, including private finance in 19 countries. Ten countries in Africa developed integrated national financing frameworks, including Ethiopia, Lesotho and Rwanda.

21. **Integrated access to essential services, digital and other assets, and finance.** With UNDP support, 137 million women accessed essential services in 2024, up from 94 million in 2023. Integrated services have ripple effects, leading to financial empowerment, more equitable dynamics within households and greater food security. Through women's empowerment, they strengthen the ability of families to cope with risks and improve the quality of life.

22. Through UNDP, 139 million women obtained financial services in 2024, up from 28 million in 2023. In Latin America, in partnership with CAF development bank of Latin America, UNDP worked with seven banks in Argentina, Bolivia, Mexico and Panama to develop financial products and services that promote equal opportunities, benefiting over 44 million clients.

23. UNDP integrated support for financial inclusion with strategies for economic empowerment and climate adaptation. In Mexico, a financial inclusion model provided access to insurance products for women protecting against climate risks. In the state of Morelos, this intervention was coupled with creating 18 cooperatives to provide women with seed capital and entrepreneurial skills.

Governance

24. UNDP advances women's participation and leadership in governance, as evidence shows that their presence fosters trust and enhances social welfare, legal protections and transparency.

25. **Women's collective mobilization and leadership.** In 2024, 102 country offices partnered with women's organizations, including to advocate for women's rights (89), address violence against women (63), support movement-building (29) and work with climate advocates and defenders (30). In Morocco, collaboration with women's organizations identified the specific needs of women in remote areas and resulted in targeted support for self-employment and women's businesses.

26. **Towards gender-responsive States.** UNDP worked with governments in 30 countries through the flagship Gender Equality Seal for Public Institutions, strengthening the capacities of more than 100 public institutions to provide policies and services. More than 266,000 public servants and 11 sectors took part. By December 2024, 29 public institutions had been awarded the seal: 8 gold, 13 silver and 8 bronze. Awardees ranged from transport ministries to risk management entities to judiciary councils.

27. The General Comptroller of the Republic of Peru, awarded the Gold Seal, bolstered its audit strategies to identify challenges in services to protect victims of violence against women, including gaps in confidentiality and follow-up. This resulted in an action plan to improve delivery. In Guatemala, the Secretary for the Coordination of Disaster Risk Reduction became the first public environmental institution globally to obtain the Seal. It strengthened the participation of Indigenous women in local disaster risk management.

28. Institutions awarded the Seal improve on several fronts: 100 per cent have adopted specific goals that promote equal opportunities; 81 per cent have mechanisms to collect sex-disaggregated data; 68 per cent have specialized departments with action plans and dedicated budgets reporting to the highest authorities; 77 per cent have work-life balance policies; 100 per cent have policies and protocols for preventing and addressing sexual harassment; 42 per cent have mechanisms to demonstrate accountability to women's organizations; and 52 per cent integrate equal opportunity outcomes in top institutional policies or programmes.

29. **Achieving women's access to justice.** In collaboration with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the Gender Justice Platform delivered advances in justice and security in more than 40 countries in 2024, up from 19 countries in 2023. Results included better service delivery, stronger mechanisms to address discrimination and violence, and gains in women's meaningful participation and leadership. New [research on women in justice in Africa](#) catalyzed advocacy in judicial leadership, while initiatives in Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic and Thailand focused attention on the underrepresentation of women in judicial leadership. UNDP provided critical, often live-saving support to survivors of conflict-related sexual violence in Colombia, Ethiopia, Kosovo,¹ and Ukraine.

30. Through the Gender Justice Platform, mentoring programmes for prosecutors, investigators and police in Kenya and Kosovo helped combat impunity for international crimes. In Afghanistan, Iraq and Ukraine, the platform strengthened civil society organizations to document conflict-related sexual violence and advocate for transitional justice, increasing accountability and progress in post-conflict settings.

Resilience

31. In 2024, UNDP integrated equality across its resilience work, including in disaster risk reduction and management, support for employment and livelihood opportunities for women recovering from crises, and collaboration with women's rights organizations to increase women's leadership in peace and recovery.

¹References to Kosovo are under United Nations Security Council resolution 1244.

32. **Risk reduction and management.** UNDP increased sex-disaggregated data and gender analysis in recovery plans in 20 countries in 2024, down from 28 in 2023. Cuba, Indonesia, Maldives, Myanmar, Samoa and Yemen developed early warning systems that strengthen women's engagement and leadership. In Ethiopia, disaster risk measures strengthened the resilience of women-headed households affected by landslides.

33. UNDP integrated data analytics in conflict analysis in six countries, specifically in Liberia, the Syrian Arab Republic and the Sahel region, helping to identify root causes of conflict and inform targeted interventions towards the empowerment of women.

34. **Resilient recovery.** Numerous integrated strategies successfully expanded women's access to critical resources for resilience, such as knowledge, land, credit, technology, social protection and care services. In 2024, through work on poverty reduction and resilience, 1.3 million women gained jobs and improved livelihoods in 42 countries with crisis or post-crisis settings. Programmes for survivors of violence against women increasingly integrated economic empowerment and mental and psychological support, improving women's resilience and economic participation. In South Sudan, UNDP partnered with a network of trained volunteers to provide mental health and psychosocial support and economic reintegration assistance to women associated with armed groups, deepening peace and stability in their communities.

35. In the Syrian Arab Republic, UNDP has taken an integrated approach to a severe humanitarian crisis, economic decline and limited improvement in women's rights. It improved women's access to long-term employment and partnered with 22 networks and women-led civil society organizations to amplify women's voices, strengthen their leadership and to manage women's safe centres. Over 19,000 women and girls found refuge in the safe centres. The Fadfada platform, an innovative digital service, has provided more than 13,000 women with remote mental health and psychosocial support. The Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People and UNDP in Ukraine offered critical support to women-led civil society organizations in delivering urgent humanitarian assistance and driving early recovery efforts, strengthening community resilience.

36. UNDP continuously innovates and adapts its strategies to support women's empowerment in complex, rapidly changing environments. In Afghanistan, combined solutions such as remote work, digital skills training and community-led initiatives sustain women's participation in economic and social development.

37. UNDP put equal opportunities at the centre of its new early recovery packages and updated its [gender and recovery toolkit](#). Both resources make expert guidance immediately available at the onset of a crisis. They help to prioritize women's leadership, address women's specific needs in the earliest stages of a response.

38. **Women's leadership and full participation in peace and recovery** (see signature solution 6).

Environment

39. UNDP helped bring the empowerment of women to the centre of the historic 2024 convergence of global talks on biodiversity, climate change and desertification. Improved environment data and forward-looking research informed the integration of the empowerment of women into national biodiversity and climate strategies.

40. **Reducing risks and steering the sustainable, equitable use of natural resources.** UNDP support for 6.8 million women across 76 countries, up from 5.3 million in 2023, resulted in measures to protect nature and increase the sustainable use of resources. In India, through the Global Environment Facility (GEF), UNDP integrated conservation, sustainable livelihoods and measures promoting the empowerment of women through the SECURE Himalayas project. It has improved women's livelihoods and leadership roles in biodiversity monitoring, including through women-led self-help groups that have become instrumental in developing eco-tourism and related value chains.

41. In the United Republic of Tanzania, integrated support for climate, resilience and poverty reduction included using a Climate Impact and Vulnerability Assessment to highlight women's limited access to alternative livelihoods and increased burdens due to water shortages and crop pests. Based on the assessment, community engagement and capacity-building for local officials helped embed women's needs in local development activities.

42. Evaluations have highlighted a step change in integrated programming linking work on the environment and gender equality, including through the UNDP Nature Pledge. It applies an equal opportunities approach in supporting 140 countries to integrate nature into national and sectoral plans. In tandem, UNDP has assisted 100 countries to increase women's leadership and decision-making in natural resource management and close gender gaps in access to and control over natural resources. Globally, among projects completed under the GEF-financed Small Grants Programme in 2024, 41 per cent were led by women and 86 per cent promoted other actions towards the empowerment of women.

43. During the global climate, biodiversity and desertification meetings, UNDP published the [Nature for Gender Equality](#) activation kit as an advocacy tool for negotiators, partners and other stakeholders. A publication, [Integrated Actions for Accelerated Impacts](#), showcased real-world successes providing examples of harmonized national biodiversity strategies and action plans and nationally determined contributions that promote equal opportunities for all.

44. **Commitments in climate action plans.** Through UNDP leadership in 2024, the multi-partner Climate Promise helped over 63 countries implement provisions in nationally determined contributions that promote the empowerment of women. 44 countries strengthened institutional capacities to address gender and climate in ministries of environment, energy and finance. In Latin America and the Caribbean, UNDP supported 26 countries to integrate women's leadership into national climate plans. UNDP collaborated with women's organizations on climate change advocacy in 30 countries, up from 22 in 2022.

45. Under the Climate Promise, UNDP funded Indigenous women's groups in Cambodia, Colombia, Ecuador and Kenya to bring their knowledge on climate and forests into national climate and biodiversity plans, resulting in advances on climate targets. In Colombia, integrated support for women of African descent who have experienced violence helped achieve goals to improve livelihoods, safety and conservation, including through restoring mangroves, deepening climate adaptation and biodiversity protection and economic empowerment.

46. UNDP promoted the advance of the empowerment of women in Green Climate Fund-financed projects on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in Brazil, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Ghana and Indonesia. Under the United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries (REDD+), 20 countries integrated provisions into deforestation-free value chains, performance-based climate finance, forest fire prevention and implementation of nationally determined contributions that promote equal opportunities between women and men. In Indonesia the Kalimantan Forest (KALFOR) project provides skills and financial support to women and communities to develop both sustainable livelihoods and forest conservation.

47. Moving forward, UNDP will strengthen institutional capacities, policy coherence and budget allocations as part of a comprehensive approach to driving deeper changes in the structures that cause both inequality and environmental crises.

Energy

48. Through UNDP, the benefits of clean energy are expected to reach 177 million people in 128 countries from 2022 to 2025, including 88.5 million women. Links between clean energy and the empowerment of women work both ways: Clean energy can accelerate women's rights, and more rights can propel clean energy uptake.

49. **Greater energy access to unleash women's economic empowerment.** In 2024, UNDP increased access for 17 million women in 45 countries, up from 14 million in 37 countries in 2023. Initiatives such as Powering Gender Equality used clean energy to boost women's economic empowerment in Ethiopia, Eswatini, Madagascar and Malawi. Women-led cooperatives, for example, gained energy-efficient technologies such as industrial baking equipment; some businesses increased production fivefold. In all four countries, UNDP supported policy reviews with energy ministries to integrate them into national energy policies.

50. **Energy investments to reduce time poverty.** UNDP has mobilized \$139 million in grants for clean cooking projects in 27 countries, targeting 2.73 million people. These integrated initiatives reduce deforestation, pollution and women's time poverty. In Mongolia, UNDP supported a transition from coal to solar-powered heaters focused on female-headed households and assisted the Ministry of Energy to implement its new Gender Equality Strategy and Action Plan.

51. **Energy in crisis responses.** In Moldova, as an emergency response to the sharp rise in crop prices caused by disrupted supply chains and energy shortages in war-torn Ukraine, UNDP helped women agricultural entrepreneurs adopt energy-efficient renewable energy solutions and equipped regional non-governmental organizations to build capacities to apply energy-smart solutions. This initiative reduced dependency on non-renewable energy, lowered operational costs and enhanced product quality.

52. **Integrated policy advice.** The UNDP Sustainable Energy Hub systematically promotes equal opportunities and the empowerment of women in policy advice to countries. In 2024, it developed guidance linked to energy provision during crisis responses and launched a [clean cooking policy brief](#).

Gender equality

53. Signature solution six reflects key priorities of the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. It targets accelerators such as the elimination of market segregation, women's equal political representation, the prevention and response to violence against women, countering the backlash against women's rights and generating data for policy changes. While signature solution 6 calls for stand-alone interventions at each level of UNDP, it is designed for implementation across all of the other five signature solutions.

54. **Inclusive economies and the economic empowerment of women.** In 2024, UNDP supported 32 countries, up from 29 in 2023, to eliminate barriers that perpetuate labour segregation and discrimination in the economy. This included integrated initiatives to improve access to finance, land, digital assets and entrepreneurship opportunities. In Sierra Leone, grants, technical assistance and business development services transformed women-led enterprises and expanded operations into value-added sectors like baby food and cocoa products. UNDP support increased income, halved production times and created additional employment for women smallholder farmers, particularly out-of-school adolescent girls and young women. Forward-looking research in the Arab States is examining opportunities, challenges and risks in the future of work for women in green and digital sectors.

55. In 2024, UNDP supported 28 countries to close the gender digital divide, up from 22 in 2023. In Armenia, to develop the National Employment Strategy 2024-2030, UNDP piloted a digital upskilling initiative for women that increased employability and digital participation.

56. UNDP is steadily expanding support for women's rights to land ownership and other property, following an evaluation recommendation. In Togo, public campaigns resulted in better understanding of laws and legal procedures for more than 1,000 women. The Amkeni Wakenya initiative in Kenya has improved women's legal literacy and access to justice, including for succession and property disputes. UNDP assisted more than 500 women in the Panama Canal Watershed to gain new land titles and increase their participation in local governance.

57. **Equal power and representation.** 2024 was a significant year for elections. UNDP supported the participation of 140 million women voters in 26 countries, up from 133 million in 2023. In 47 countries,

UNDP helped to advance women's leadership and equal participation in public institutions, focusing on measures to empower women in public offices through women's networks, caucuses and parliamentary committees. In Thailand, capacity-building workshops, learning exchanges and advocacy enhanced the skills and visibility of women politicians and candidates. In The Gambia, UNDP support for 60 women leaders, 75 aspiring leaders, 10 civil society organizations and 50 grass-roots women's networks contributed to a 78.3 per cent increase in women's representation in community structures and the rejection of an attempted repeal of the law against female genital mutilation. In Georgia, women's share of municipal decision-making positions rose to 30 per cent in 2024, up from only 13.4 per cent in 2022, following successful UNDP advocacy with three major political parties.

58. Women's leadership and full participation in peace and recovery. UNDP made continued advances for women in mediation, reconciliation and peacebuilding mechanisms in 25 countries, up from 22 countries in 2023. It assisted the Women Insider Mediators Rapid Action and Mobilization Platform in the Philippines, a group of 157 community-based women peacebuilders in the Bangsamoro region, to maintain peace during recent elections. The platform uses an integrated peace and development approach. It helps to resolve land and clan feuds, address family disputes and stop intimate partner violence. It also addresses critical issues in health, education and livelihoods, strengthening community resilience.

59. In Iraq, UNDP works with the security sector to break down entrenched barriers and challenge harmful masculine norms. An innovative national e-platform serves as a knowledge hub to document, monitor, and drive discussions on peace and security, while a self-assessment methodology, developed in partnership with the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance, helps build bridges between the national women's machinery, the security sector and civil society organizations.

60. UNDP increasingly works with local women's organizations on crisis responses. The Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People has strengthened their capacities to provide legal aid, mediation, psychosocial support and other inclusive socio-economic services to nearly 8,000 women. Through these efforts, One-Stop Community Service Centres were established with the assistance of UNDP. The centres also offered higher education services, reaching 77,100 students; over 65 per cent were young women.

61. Preventing and responding to gender-based violence. UNDP supported 41 countries in 2024 to improve and implement laws, policies, action plans and other initiatives to stop violence against women. In Malawi, assistance entailed establishing an e-court platform removing barriers to legal services, such as high transportation costs, and increasing the efficient and transparent management of cases. Both are steps towards greater protection for survivors and accountability within the justice system.

62. The Spotlight Initiative 2.0, launched in 2024 with continued support from the European Union and other partners, is expanding national ownership and stopping violence against women. In Uganda, efforts to end sexual and intimate partner violence against women in 12 target districts have already resulted in a 1.5 per cent increase in formal reporting. In Trinidad and Tobago, UNDP collaborated with the Police Academy on policing, training over 600 officers and increasing reporting at police stations.

63. UNDP strengthened police capacities to respond to technology-facilitated violence against women in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Côte d'Ivoire, Indonesia and North Macedonia, working in partnership with the Korean National Police Academy.

64. Reversing the backlash. Building coalitions to advocate for women's rights is helping to protect gains and countering the backlash. In Latin America, UNDP supported seven civil society organizations from Argentina, Brazil, Colombia and Guatemala to develop strategies against the backlash.

65. Integration of intersectional perspectives into country programmes. Through the Gender Equality Seal for Public Institutions, the Ministry of Management and Public Services Innovation in Brazil has trained 500,000 public servants on integrating race considerations in policies and services. In Montenegro, local dialogues included Roma women in building community trust and resilience.

66. **Changing negative social norms.** UNDP implemented 486 initiatives to tackle harmful social norms and discrimination against women in 36 countries in 2024. The Gender Equality Barometer of Bosnia and Herzegovina, developed with UNDP assistance, examines social norms, practices and power dynamics, highlighting how entrenched norms hinder progress in spite of institutional efforts. It has drawn attention to the importance of targeted actions in employment, the care economy, political participation and violence against women. Through the Women Forum for Development, barometer findings have also galvanized 2,000 women's right advocates to step up advocacy for systemic change and social transformation.

67. **Better data and analysis for policymaking.** In 2024, 68 countries improved gender data collection and analysis. A care georeferencing tool in the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Honduras and Peru used innovations such as data mining and collaborative mapping to generate real-time data on care supply and demand. The tool has been crucial in identifying care gaps and informing policy recommendations to improve care services and infrastructure for children, older adults and persons with disabilities. In Serbia, UNDP is enhancing gender data on women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), among other improvements to data collection.

III. Partnerships

68. UNDP pursued creative, engaging and analytical collaboration through an array of partnerships. These fostered collective leadership and learning and drew on and valued diverse sources of knowledge and skill.

69. **Coordination with the United Nations system.** UNDP remains fully committed to strong implementation of the United Nations System Gender Equality Acceleration Plan and UN-SWAP 3.0. Both are powerful opportunities to strengthen inter-agency and internal coordination. UNDP is also a proactive member of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG) Task Team on Gender Equality and continues to implement the United Nations country team-SWAP Gender Equality Score Card at the country level. In 2024, 101 country offices successfully implemented the score card, up from 94 in 2023. Additionally, 48 UNDP country offices co-chaired inter-agency theme groups, fostering a unified, impactful approach across country teams.

70. UN-Women remains a steadfast partner of UNDP in 75 countries, including on strategic planning, communications and advocacy, and joint programming. For example, a UNDP partnership with UN-Women supported the African Union's High-Level Presidential Initiative on Positive Masculinity in Leadership, which resulted in a historic decision to develop the African Union Convention on Ending Violence Against Women and Girls. This collaboration involved extensive consultations with the African Women Leaders Network, civil society organizations, youth and other stakeholders.

71. UNDP continued to engage with other entities across the United Nations. The Ra'idat Programme, a joint initiative involving the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), UNDP, UN-Women and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), provides training, mentorship and international exposure to young women in Libya, building skills on campaign planning, public speaking and advocacy. With over 700 applicants, the programme has led participants to run for local political office and initiate community projects, increasing the representation and impact of young Libyan women in political decision-making.

72. **Expanded links with civil society.** UNDP uses its convening power and policy dialogue space to create and sustain engagement between policymakers and women's organizations, community-based organizations, and women's groups and networks. More than 100 country offices partnered with women's organizations and movements in 2024, especially on advocating women's rights, movement-building and expanding civic space. In Zambia, UNDP brought together government officials, United Nations entities and civil society organizations to scale up the prevention and response to violence against women. This led to the creation of fast-track courts and community-led one-stop centres, and galvanizing local leadership behind social and behavioural changes to reduce acceptance of violence against women.

73. UNDP systematically collaborates with women's organizations and other groups in advocating the rights of women with disabilities. In Montenegro, UNDP supported the Government to draft the Law on Unified Disability Assessment. In Cabo Verde, technical and financial support advanced implementation of the Strategy for the Inclusion of People with Disabilities 2024–2030, including through an inventory of social infrastructure and services. The strategy emphasizes targeted support for women.

74. **A broader spectrum of partners.** UNDP builds lasting relationships with non-traditional partners such as faith-based organizations and youth networks in leading efforts to halt violent extremism and shift behaviours harmful to women. In 2024, UNDP built peace and social cohesion in Burkina Faso by training young women leaders, religious figures and more than 160 civil society organizations on dialogue, conflict prevention, care for survivors of violence against women, interreligious dialogue, and preventing radicalization and violent extremism.

75. Collaboration with academic institutions and think tanks promotes women's leadership. In Kosovo, UNDP began fostering a new generation of social cohesion advocates by partnering with the University of Pristina Department of Journalism to engage 100 young women in discussions on transitional justice. In 2024, with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the University of Pittsburgh, UNDP supported national action plans for civil services to promote women's leadership in public administration, including in Bhutan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mauritius and Senegal.

76. UNDP continued collaboration with international financial institutions and multilateral development banks. In Costa Rica, UNDP partnered with the national women's machinery and the Inter-American Development Bank to increase financial inclusion and realize equal pay in companies and public institutions.

77. **The private sector.** Strategic partnerships harness private sector investment and innovation. In India, UNDP, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation developed scalable childcare models to enhance women's labour force participation, backed by the Urban Care Coalition, which links key public and private stakeholders to mobilize investment. It has established pilot services in a half dozen cities so far, based on public and private partnerships.

78. The Gender Equality Seal for the Private Sector is becoming a strategic mechanism to institutionalize business practices that benefit women and entire economies. In 2024, 161 private sector companies in energy, telecommunications and finance were awarded the Seal. In Rwanda, certified financial institutions include the Central Bank of Rwanda, which launched the [Not Alone](#) policy to strengthen rural women's access to mobile money services. The initiative reached over 8,500 women; nearly 2,700 used mobile money for the first time.

79. **UNDP deepened engagement with key donors, including through its Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Funding Window.** The governments of Luxembourg and the Republic of Korea remain committed partners in building growing flagship programmes, such as Equanomics, and steering innovations. The Government of France doubled investment for the women, peace and security agenda, supporting greater UNDP assistance for women's leadership and economic recovery in crisis contexts. Fruitful collaborations with Canada, Germany, Norway, Spain and the United Kingdom flourished in 2024. New collaborations with philanthropies included the Hewlett and Gates foundations.

IV. Institutional transformation

80. In 2024, UNDP strengthened the seven interconnected building blocks of its institutional framework (leadership, integration, learning and innovation, culture, funding, accountability and communication).

81. UNDP used the Gender Equality Seal to advance progress across country offices, with a record 66 receiving certification. A Seal Awards Ceremony attracted over 1,500 attendees from around the world to celebrate the accomplishments of 11 gold, 30 silver and 25 bronze Seal recipients, along with a special track recognizing 13 crisis-affected countries.

82. The Seal programme for 2025-2027 will include updated standards aligned with the United Nations Gender Equality Acceleration Plan and UN-SWAP 3.0. An enhanced crisis track will provide targeted support one-on-one to help offices in crisis settings better navigate complex contexts. A new Green Gender Seal will feature an ambitious voluntary certification track designed to integrate the empowerment of women through environment and energy initiatives.

83. **Performance against UN-SWAP 2.0.** UNDP maintained its high score by exceeding or meeting targets on 15 of 16 relevant indicators.

84. **Leadership.** In 2024, 25 UNDP leaders successfully completed the Leadership for Gender Equality Certificate, including resident representatives, deputy resident representatives and regional hub managers. The certificate, co-facilitated with Gender@Work and Kings College, covers more than 20 hours of learning. In line with the Secretary-General's commitment to advocate for women's rights, in 2024, 52 per cent of speeches and statements by the UNDP Administrator and 50 per cent by the UNDP Associate Administrator explicitly referred to women's empowerment and/or related topics.

85. **Integration and specialization.** UNDP is adopting more agile approaches to enhance institutional effectiveness. The global UNDP Gender Team remains the cornerstone of the UNDP organizational architecture. Multidisciplinary teams continue to prove increasingly effective in enhancing both vertical and horizontal coordination.

86. **Continuous learning and innovation.** In June 2024, UNDP concluded the first round of the Equanomics Global Learning Lab on Gender Equal Economies, involving a cohort of 60 economists. This initiative connected UNDP economists with leading global economists to rethink policy options and alternative solutions to improve economies, including through fiscal policies, labour markets, climate change, and the interrelationship between the economy and negative social norms. The percentage of UNDP economists who felt very familiar with the above topics increased from 25 to over 68 per cent. Those who felt comfortable discussing these issues with government partners rose from 45 to nearly 80 per cent.

87. UNDP also paired 17 country offices with globally renowned female economists to support portfolio implementation and innovation. Many offices focused on expanding care systems, such as through urban planning in India, national care policies in Bhutan and Chile, and macro-modelling in Cambodia to simulate national economic growth driven by public investments in care. Other efforts included public finance reforms to promote equal opportunities in Montenegro's National Growth Plan, assessing the varying impact of household indebtedness on women and men in Sri Lanka, and addressing tax biases and enhancing budgeting that promotes equal opportunities in Thailand.

88. **An equal and inclusive culture.** UNDP strives for a culture that respects and values every person, and where everyone is safe, feels included and has access to opportunities. The Speak Up Culture initiative fosters an inclusive and supportive workplace, encouraging proactive engagement while deterring passive bystander behaviour. Combined interventions piloted with twelve offices over a two-year period (2023-2024) included 2,000 personnel of all contract modalities.

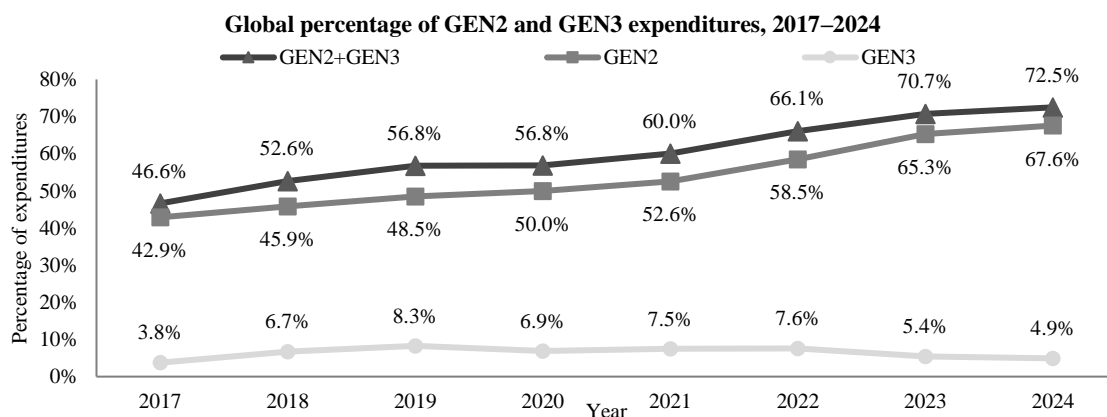
89. To enhance internal capacities for preventing and addressing sexual harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse, UNDP has concentrated on prevention, reporting and response, support for survivors and accountability. All bureaux and offices submitted action plans and annual implementation certifications on these issues to the Administrator in 2024. Some 94 per cent of personnel completed both the sexual harassment course and the Sexual Exploitation and Abuse course. An estimated 4,000 personnel were trained across 50 country offices, including all resident representatives; deputy resident representatives; 181 focal points on preventing sexual harassment, sexual exploitation and abuse; all management staff (P4 and above) in the four central bureaux; all junior professional officers and all African Fellows.

90. By December 2024, UNDP achieved full gender parity across all staffing levels, including Assistant Secretary-Generals, Resident Representatives and Deputy Resident Representatives. Some challenges persist

in the representation of women at the G1-G4, NOC, NOD, P4, P5 and D2 levels, and with the number of men at more junior levels, such as NOA, P1 and P2 and at G5-G7. Ongoing efforts are necessary to bring more women into decision-making positions, especially in crisis-affected countries. UNDP offers various learning and career development programmes to correct leadership imbalances. In 2024, a new cohort of the SPARK Programme, an online career development initiative for women, was delivered to 117 participants, with an 88 per cent completion rate. Feedback indicated progress in career ownership, with 33 per cent of past participants reporting positive career changes.

91. **Mobilizing men.** In 2024, the Gender Community of Practice promoted positive masculinity and engaged men as partners. The Community Dialogue Series: Transforming Masculinities and Targeting Men and Boys featured a session on an Independent Evaluation Office Reflection Report, [Lessons from Evaluations: Masculinities and Engaging Men for Gender Equality](#).

92. **Matching ambition with financial resources.** Long-term financial investments are crucial to support comprehensive programmes for women's empowerment. Despite strains on development finance and rising humanitarian costs, UNDP remains committed to protecting and increasing investment by securing sustained funding. In 2024, UNDP allocated 73 per cent of expenditures to gender-specific interventions (GEN3 at five per cent) and interventions with gender equality as a significant objective (GEN2 at 68 per cent), exceeding the 2024 milestone of 68 per cent and achieving the goal of 70 per cent set for 2025. Around 65 country offices have reached the milestone of eliminating gender-blind expenditures with no noticeable contribution to gender equality (GEN0).



Source: UNDP Atlas and Quantum 2024.

93. **Accountability.** The Gender Steering and Implementation Committee, chaired by the Administrator, met on 8 March and 1 July 2024. In the first meeting, the committee noted UNDP progress in aligning \$100 billion of public finance with corporate objectives and recommended developing a comprehensive Funding Windows package for Equanomics and a crisis countries track. In the second meeting, the committee emphasized the need for UNDP to be part of a coherent United Nations response to pushback against women's rights, suggesting a focus on equipping leaders to address backlash and leveraging UNDP governance capacities to address backsliding. The United Nations Gender Equality Acceleration Plan working group pointed to the committee as a good practice, encouraging all organizations to create a similar mechanism, including the office of the Secretary-General.

94. UNDP convened its Advisory Circle, comprising civil society and external experts, to guide and track implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy 2022-2025. The circle includes experts and practitioners in areas like gender and energy; women, peace and security; economics and women's organizing more broadly. It held two meetings in 2024, with discussions centering on the progress of the implementation of the Strategy the impact of backlash on women's rights, and the role of UNDP in addressing these challenges.

95. **Communications for advocacy.** In 2024, the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Community of Practice advanced integrated, innovative approaches to knowledge-sharing. It delivered curated services for upskilling, peer-to-peer engagement and co-creation, fostering collaboration and capacity-building across country offices. Nearly 2,400 participants from over 100 country offices took part in 17 global sessions to deepen the integration of the empowerment of women in crises and development support on energy, artificial intelligence and digitalization, and institutional transformation. The Snapshots series highlighted emerging trends from 31 country offices, offering practical insights and actionable solutions.
96. UNDP conducted a global advocacy campaign, *Building Gender Equal Economies*. The [English-language version of the campaign video 'Gender Equal Economies'](#) became the most-watched video on the UNDP YouTube channel with nearly 1 million views, performing particularly well in Venezuela (500k views) and Argentina (200k views). In addition, [an opinion piece on gender and poverty](#) appeared on CNN.com in collaboration with Emmy and SAG award-winning actor Uzo Aduba, and our multimedia [Equanomics](#) and [unleashing women's economic power](#) stories were widely shared across the UN system. UNDP Goodwill Ambassadors [Michelle Yeoh](#), [Connie Britton](#), [Padma Lakshmi](#) and [Antonio Banderas](#) shared campaign content on their social media, with a combined reach of nearly 8.5 million people. A newly designed [Partnerships Brief](#) also updated 32 of our top donors ahead of International Women's Day, with information on the impact of UNDP and its ambitious agenda moving ahead, along with recognition to our partners for their continued support.

V. The way forward

96. By 2024, UNDP had completed three successful years in implementing its Gender Equality Strategy, demonstrating solid achievements despite global challenges. The organization drives positive change by integrating gender equality into support for countries to reduce poverty, reform fiscal structures, expand comprehensive care policies, empower women's rights organizations, safeguard civic space and put women at the forefront of peace, recovery and the green transition. With a strong focus on scaling up implementation and strengthening analytical capacities, UNDP will continue supporting countries in reshaping development structures for a more equitable and prosperous future for all society.
97. In navigating towards 2030 and the endpoint of the Sustainable Development Goals, UNDP will use the Strategy as a guiding framework. As UNDP transitions to the new Strategic Plan, 2026-2029, it will prioritize learning, learning, responsiveness to challenges, and seizing opportunities that yield lasting impact.