



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: Limited
12 June 2025

Original: English

Committee for Programme and Coordination

Sixty-fifth session

New York, 12 May–13 June 2025

Draft report

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Addendum

Programme questions: proposed programme budget for 2026

(Item 3 (a))

Programme 14

Gender equality and the empowerment of women

1. At its 8th meeting, on 15 May 2025, the Committee considered programme 14, Gender equality and the empowerment of women, of the proposed programme plan for 2026 and programme performance in 2024 ([A/80/6 \(Sect. 17\)](#)).

Discussion

2. Strong support was expressed for programme 14, Gender equality and the empowerment of women, in advancing gender equality, women's empowerment and the protection of human rights. The role of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) in addressing all forms of violence against women and girls, including sexual and gender-based violence, was particularly welcomed. Another delegation stated that the prevention of and accountability for sexual and gender-based violence must remain a paramount priority.

3. The view was expressed that UN-Women must uphold a zero-tolerance policy and ensure justice for victims and survivors. Support was expressed for a victim- and survivor-centred approach. UN-Women was called upon to ensure that its programming reflected that commitment, maintaining the integrity and credibility of the institution in its efforts to combat sexual and gender-based violence.

4. It was emphasized that achieving gender parity throughout the Entity must remain a priority, and encouragement was given for ongoing efforts in that regard.



The principle of diversity was acknowledged as broad and inclusive, and commitments were reiterated to ensuring equality and professional development without discrimination on the basis of sex, nationality, age, race, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity.

5. Recognition was also given to the relevance and impact of the thematic focus areas of UN-Women, and delegations acknowledged UN-Women as an essential partner in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other multilateral agreements, including the Pact for the Future.

6. Appreciation and support were expressed for the importance of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls as central to sustainable development, peace, human rights, humanitarian efforts, and peace and security initiatives. It was emphasized that the work of UN-Women remained vital in advancing those goals, particularly in the context of rising global challenges such as armed conflicts, the climate crisis and economic and fiscal challenges. Concern was raised that the withdrawal of peacekeeping operations had a significant and disproportionate impact on women and girls worldwide.

7. It was emphasized that the anti-discrimination agenda included gender equality and the empowerment of women, with particular attention to the inclusion of persons with disabilities. The view was expressed that an intersectional approach to gender was essential, and concern was raised regarding the absence of references to the LGBTQIA+ community in the programme plan. Clarification was sought on how the principle of inclusion, especially regarding “all women and girls in all their diversity”, would be interpreted and operationalized.

8. Efforts to support women and girls with disabilities, including through leadership in promoting disability inclusion across the United Nations system, were welcomed.

9. It was emphasized that the triple mandate of UN-Women, namely, normative support, operational support and coordination, remained essential and should be fully supported by Member States. Delegations highlighted the need for greater institutional efficiency, transparency and measurable outcomes. Appreciation was conveyed for the focus on performance management, accountability and the digital transformation of the Entity’s systems. The streamlining of initiatives and the use of evidence-based assessments to eliminate duplication were also encouraged.

10. The view was expressed that the global political climate, including the rise of populist and conservative politics, posed a threat to the progress made in areas such as rights related to sexual and reproductive health. It was emphasized that gender equality should be pursued holistically.

11. A delegation commended UN-Women for its achievements in 2024, including the engagement of over 6,572 civil society and youth representatives to participate in consultations and capacity-building workshops on the 30-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

12. Appreciation was expressed for the support provided by UN-Women to the Bureau of the Commission on the Status of Women at its sixty-ninth session, in particular to the co-facilitators of the political declaration for the thirtieth anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration. It was noted that that support had been instrumental in achieving a consensual and ambitious outcome. In that regard, questions were raised on how the findings and outcomes of the 30-year review and appraisal process were being applied in the Entity’s current work, including how UN-Women was supporting finance and sectoral ministries in the design and implementation of gender-responsive budgets.

13. It was emphasized that societies in which all individuals enjoyed equal rights and opportunities, particularly with regard to gender equality, were more peaceful, just, sustainable and prosperous. In contrast, where women were marginalized, mistreated or excluded from participation, entire communities suffered.

14. The view was expressed that gender equality remained far from realized globally, and that women, along with children and older persons, continued to be among the most vulnerable. In that context, a delegation expressed that strong policies in support of the rights and empowerment of women and girls were considered essential.

15. Support was expressed for the pivot by UN-Women to regional- and country-level operations, with recognition of the newly established support centres in Nairobi and Bonn, Germany. Delegations requested clarification on how that shift would improve programme delivery and whether it would affect support to country offices or create risks of deprioritizing certain programmes. Clarification was sought on whether the roll-out of the approach was planned to begin in 2026, and it was noted that it would have been helpful to see that reflected in the programme plan despite time and resource constraints.

16. It was reaffirmed that the commitment to the rights of women and the creation of genuine, substantive opportunities for their empowerment remained grounded in international treaty obligations and national constitutional provisions, including references to gender in legal instruments such as article 7 (3) of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, which identified male and female as the two genders. In that context, another delegation noted that references to gender in the programme plan were understood to align with biological sex distinctions. The view was expressed that the use of precise terminology supported clearer communication and more effective implementation among the diverse Member States collaborating on gender equality initiatives.

17. A delegation noted the importance of mental health and psychosocial support services, referencing several General Assembly resolutions. It was observed that the programme plan lacked explicit references to those services, and clarification was sought on what efforts had been made to enhance the availability of mental health and psychosocial support services and to mainstream a gender perspective in that area.

18. Delegations reiterated their support for the work of UN-Women and its alignment with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, while calling for continued focus on inclusive, evidence-based and results-oriented programming.

19. With reference to subprogramme 1, Intergovernmental support, coordination and strategic partnerships, and figure 17.I, clarification was sought on plans for the continued implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in 2025, including whether a follow-up plan was envisaged.

20. It was further emphasized that gender equality and the rights of women and girls remained a national and foreign policy priority, and that, 30 years after the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action, efforts to combat all forms of discrimination against women must continue.

21. In relation to figure 17.II, a delegation requested information on the selection criteria for and geographical distribution of the 28 organizations of persons with disabilities earmarked for partnership through United Nations country offices.

22. Concerns were expressed about the expansion of the UN-Women mandate beyond its founding resolutions. It was recalled that operational activities should be carried out only at the request of the relevant Member State. Questions were also

raised about data in table 17.3, including the number of Security Council and Economic and Social Council meetings and the increase in technical materials.

23. With regard to subprogramme 2, Policy and programme activities, it was acknowledged that while the envisaged outputs were fully supported, their achievement might prove challenging. Concerns were raised about the feasibility of expecting Member States to implement policies, strategies and legislation aimed at achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, particularly in the light of differing international perspectives on women's rights. It was noted that opposition by some Member States to concepts such as gender ideology, gender parity and accelerated efforts towards equality might hinder progress, and caution was urged to avoid reversing gains already made in that area.

24. In relation to paragraph 17.33, clarification was sought on the role of the programme as a global knowledge centre on gender equality and the empowerment of women. Further information was requested on the scope of the new and emerging issues being examined, particularly those involving discrimination against women and girls.

25. In relation to paragraph 17.36, appreciation was expressed for the Women's Resilience to Disasters policy tracker, with a request for information on the criteria used to identify good practices and how those were operationalized in country-level programming. Interest was also expressed in exploring whether artificial intelligence and digital tools could be leveraged to support the analysis and dissemination of such practices.

26. With reference to figure 17.V, a delegation noted that while ambition was welcomed, performance targets must be realistic and clearly planned. Questions were posed regarding how the targets for the number of institutions benefiting from the Entity's support, 1,050 in 2025 and 1,200 in 2026, had been determined. Clarification was sought on the feasibility of achieving those targets given the current global environment and resource limitations.

27. With regard to table 17.5, category B, a question was raised about the deliverables related to the transfer of knowledge and skills, including seminars and training activities. Clarification was sought on how those activities varied from year to year.

Conclusions and recommendations

28. **The Committee recommended that the plenary or the relevant Main Committee or Main Committees of the General Assembly, in line with Assembly resolution [79/247](#), consider the programme plan for programme 14, Gender equality and the empowerment of women, of the proposed programme budget for 2026 under the agenda item entitled "Programme planning" at the eightieth session of the Assembly.**
