



Network

The UN Women's Newsletter

Volume No. 22, Issue 2 – May June July August 2021

Letter from the Director, UN System Coordination Division, UN Women

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

We are back with the 2nd edition of the Network newsletter for 2021. This second quarter edition carries highlights for this quarter on gender equality and women's empowerment and the challenges facing women and girls around the world with the "shadow pandemic" of violence against women taking shape due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. This is a special edition as UN Women bids farewell to its Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo Ngcuka under whose dynamic leadership gender equality and women's empowerment rose higher than the mountains. She steered the entity to new heights and set in place monumental accomplishments on which UN Women will continue to build upon. We wish her all the best and are of the belief that she will continue to be a leader in making gender quality a lived reality wherever her life may take her. We also welcome Pramilla Patten as the Officer-in Charge of UN Women.



We begin our coverage with our interview series and we carry an interview with Lisa Shannon, a torch bearer in the fight to end violence against women and the CEO and co-founder of Every Woman Treaty - a global campaign to end VAWG.

We then move on to bring you news from the Generation Equality Forum conclusion in Paris with the Announcement of Revolutionary Commitments and Global Acceleration Plan to Advance Gender Equality by 2026, which featured over 110 events over 3 days, hosted via an online platform engaging over 50,000 people worldwide. It was an event to remember and one to shape the future of advancing women's empowerment.

Other news looks at the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development for follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to news on a new measurement framework on gender equality and women's empowerment launched jointly

by UN Women and the UNDP that helps diagnose root causes of structural gender inequality,

Also featured is news on the launch of guidelines for gender-responsive sports organizations and the HeForShe Summit in May 2021.

In recommended readings list we include a report on Corporate evaluation of UN Women's UN system coordination and broader convening role in ending violence against women amongst few others. We conclude with information on an interesting new website on Women in Aviation.

In solidarity,

Aparna Mehrotra
Director, UN system Coordination Division
UN Women

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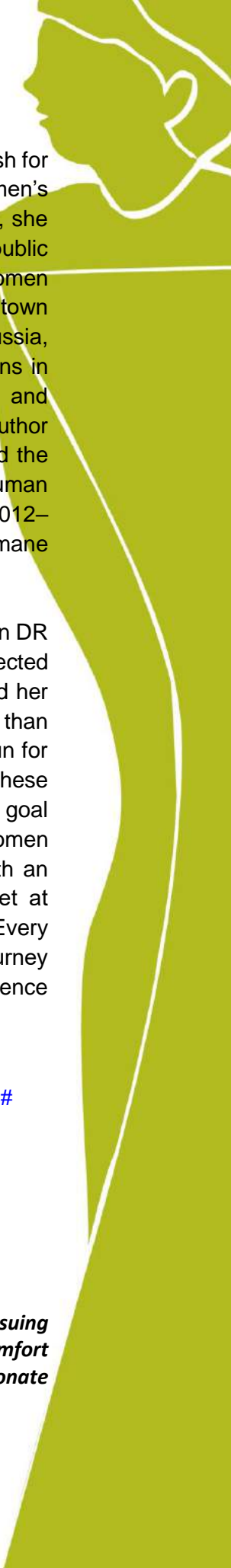
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Interview with Lisa Shannon

CEO and Co-founder Every Woman Treaty

Lisa Shannon is a woman with a mission! She is a women's rights activist and scholar who has worked in women's rights since 1991. Lisa is CEO and Co-founder of Every Woman Treaty which is a campaign to establish a global treaty to end violence against women. Concerned about the lack of accountability on violence against women and the daily





headlines on this violence worldwide, Lisa Shannon was moved to take action, to push for an end to violence against women around the world. The consistent violations of women's rights pervading every corner of the globe must come to end for nations to flourish, she says. In late 2018, Every Woman Treaty pivoted from its development phase to the public campaign: a global initiative to amplify the call for a treaty to end violence against women and girls. Lisa's first job out of college was in domestic violence shelters in her hometown of Portland, Oregon. She has conducted field research on gender in India, Russia, Somalia, Iraq, Guatemala, Kenya, and Congo. She is known for initiating campaigns in the international women's movement, including founding Run for Congo Women and cofounding the first sexual violence crisis center in Mogadishu, Somalia. She is the author of the award-winning *A Thousand Sisters* (Seal Press, 2010) and *Mama Koko and the Hundred Gunmen* (Public Affairs, 2015). Lisa was a Fellow of the Carr Center for Human Rights (2013–2014), and a Gleitsman Fellow with the Center for Public Leadership (2012–2013) at the Harvard Kennedy School. She holds an honorary Doctorate in Humane Letters from Georgetown University (2013).

One afternoon in 2005, a segment on The Oprah Winfrey Show discussing violence in DR Congo became a watershed moment, leading Lisa to become an activist for war-affected Congolese women. After sponsoring two women rape victims in Congo, she started her own organization Run for Congo Women and raised enough money to sponsor more than 1,400 women. Since Lisa's lone 30-mile trail run in 2005, thousands have joined Run for Congo Women. Lisa Shannon exchanged letters and donated money to help these women pay for basic needs and education. She ultimately raised \$1 million from her goal of \$28,000 for the rape victims in Congo. This journey to end violence against women climaxed in 2013 to take the shape for a call to end violence against women with an International Treaty. Together with a group of women's rights activists, Lisa met at Harvard's Carr Center for Human Rights to discuss the need for a treaty. The Every Woman Treaty was born on June 3, 2013. Let's find out how Lisa embarked on this journey and where she is now headed in her quest for an International Treaty to end violence against women.

Read more:


<https://www.oprah.com/own-world/lisa-shannon-visits-the-women-of-the-congovid#ixzz6y2GauNkc>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zQYBETgNnxE>

<https://www.everywoman.org>

Questions

Q.1. In 2005 you were living a comfortable life, were engaged, ran your own stock photography business with your fiancée. What happened to change your life to take on pursuing ending violence against women as your life work? What did it take to get out of your comfort zone and become an internationally recognized leader and activist? Why are you so passionate about this issue?

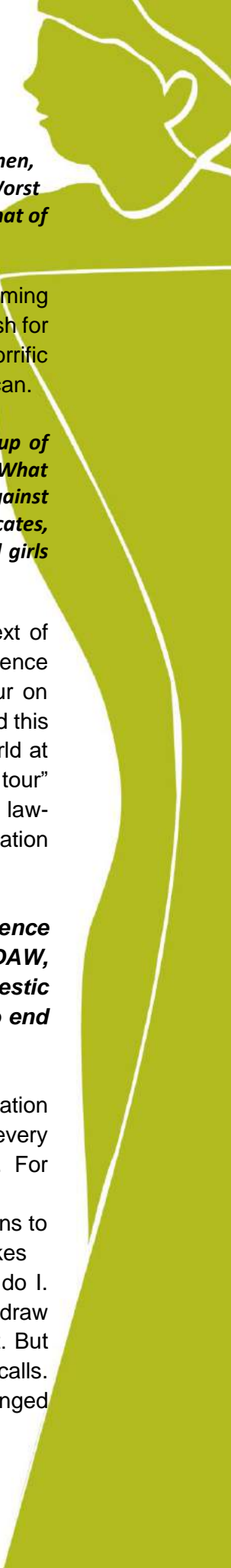


A.1. You know, the public narrative about my engagement in global women's issues begins when I was home, sprawled on the couch sick with the flu, watching an episode of Oprah on rape in the Democratic Republic of Congo. I was shocked that mass rape, so horrific in nature, could happen at that scale and not one was talking about it. So I decided to run to raise money, since that was all I could think to do at that time....little did I know taking that first step would lead me ever deeper into the movement.

However, as my work in the movement has progressed, I've taken a second look at my "origin story". I worked in women's shelters in my home town of Portland, Oregon for 5 years just out of college, from ages 21-25. Many stretches I spent every night in a shelter, working the crisis line overnight, turning away 9 out of 10 callers seeking to flee intimate partner violence, as there was no space. Yet, well after engaging in Congo advocacy, I realized the "bad year" my sister had when she was 14 (I was 12) was a textbook attempt at trafficking. And it was just last year I learned what happened to my mother when she was 8 years old: Her family was stationed in England with the US military, when she was gang raped by neighborhood teenagers-- in front of her 9 year old brother. Here she had been supporting the Congo work for years, yet she had lived through an attack just as brutal as the gang rapes happening there. When I asked her if she had ever addressed it in her years of therapy, she dismissed my concern, "Oh, that kind of thing happens to girls everywhere" So, this violence is everywhere. It's not a Congo problem, an England problem, or an Oregon problem. It is a global, human crisis we have to address collectively.

Q.2 Given that you acknowledge that your life went topsy-turvy in opposite worlds with this "marriage to philanthropy" to end violence against women; Did it come at a cost? Do you have any regret?

A.2. I have to chuckle at this question. My life choices have come at a cost, yes. But then doesn't every choice come at the expense of something or other? In my case, I spent well over a decade of what should have been prime earning years hustling so I could do the work-like renting out multiple rooms in my home to pay my mortgage, some "couch surfing" at times. Thus, there was a lot of economic instability. But more significant was not knowing how to manage vicarious trauma and self-care in the work, which did lead to significant health issues (depression, immune system issues, pretty serious caffeine addiction, etcetera). I'm working on that now- exercising, caffeine free, feeling better and stronger than ever. And still, no regrets! I work with some of the bravest, most phenomenal women on planet earth every day, like Judge Najla Aiyoubi (Afghanistan) and Marina Pisklakova Parker (Russia). They inspire me through the rough times, the days I feel overwhelmed or like the work too big to manage. And I think of the 9 month old I met in Somalia who was raped when she was 4 months old. I think of what our generation owes to her. And I keep on keeping on.



Q. 3. What was the driving force for you to create a foundation called Run for Congo Women, and pen the award-winning powerful memoir “A Thousand Sisters: My Journey into the Worst Place on Earth to Be a Woman” recounting your odyssey from a stable life in the U.S. to that of a global leader in the fight to end atrocities against Congolese women?

A.3. The deeply held belief that when we see extreme human suffering, as overwhelming as it may be, there is always something we can do- witness, support, raise funds, push for policy change. What I cannot abide, ever, is a category of human beings or forms of horrific suffering simply being written off as hopeless, so we shrug. No. We must do all we can.


Q.4 What is the Every Woman Treaty which you co-founded in 2013 with a small group of women rights advocates at the Carr Center for Human Rights, Harvard University? What encouraged you to start this campaign for a Treaty as the next step to end violence against women? How did it grow to a diverse coalition of more than 1,700 women’s rights advocates, including 840 organizations, in 128 countries working for a safer world for women and girls worldwide?

I was researching violence against women as a missing MDG, and reread the text of CEDAW. I was stunned- absolutely gobsmacked- the document did not include violence against women. Then I read the call from then United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women Rashida Majoo (South Africa) for a new global treaty to end this violence. So, we convened a group of women’s rights activists from around the world at Harvard to discuss the gaps and potential solutions. This launched a 5 year “listening tour” of frontline activists, posing questions about what might be missing in international law- and what might actually help. This included an 8-year process of deep consultation developing a Zero Draft of the treaty, and the launch into advocacy work.

Q. 5 Why do you feel a separate International Treaty is needed to end violence against women when there are other international Conventions like CEDAW, treaties like ILO VAW in the workplace, regional treaties on VAW and domestic national laws in many countries already existing? How will the treaty help to end violence against women? Why is now the right time?

Women and girls are dying and being tortured, the most widespread human rights violation on earth. They deserve nothing less than the pinnacle of commitments from every government to employ all proven interventions to the highest possible degree. For governments to be celebrated for doing so and called out for failing to do so.

The ILO Workplace Violence Treaty is a tremendous leap forward. We urge all nations to ratify without delay. However, it only covers the world of work, and most violence takes place outside of these contexts. Do you still use a computer from 1979? Neither do I. That’s not to say that the language and building blocks for our smartphones do not draw extremely useful fundamentals from 1979 technology- they wouldn’t exist without it. But we do not spend time tinkering in our garage trying to get a TRS-80 to load video calls. We can do better today, so we do. CEDAW was developed in 1979. A lot has changed



since then. We know more. Generation upon generation upon generation have grown up. We are demanding more than 1979 thinking, when violence was excluded from CEDAW as it was considered a “personal matter”. CEDAW does not contain the words like “violence” “rape”. Yes, many would like CEDAW to be interpreted to include violence. But unfortunately, many governments do not. So women and girls are left to their torturers. Unacceptable. An additional protocol to CEDAW based on Recommendation 35 would resolve this- it would be a “treaty”. Regional treaties have been developed to fill gaps left by CEDAW, including Belem do Para, Maputo Protocol and the Istanbul Convention. Africa is working on its second regional treaty on violence against women as we speak! However, 75 percent of women and girls globally are not covered by regional treaties. Their safety matters.

A final note: Europeans seem fond of suggesting the world simply accede to the Istanbul Convention. Problem: No one outside of Europe was consulted in its development. To the extent ending this violence is erroneously framed as an “export of Western values” you cannot literally export the new global norm from Europe. I’ve seen more than one non-Western diplomat roll their eyes at the suggestion. It’s a non-starter.

Q. 6 You have come a long way since 2013 in your mission to amplify the call for an international Treaty to End Violence Against Women; How close do you feel you are to your goal now?

The momentum is real. While detractors in 2014 might have been quick to dismiss calls for a new treaty, now even they acknowledge an Additional Protocol to CEDAW based on Recommendation 35 is needed. It’s important to note here that Additional Protocols ARE treaties. This has always been a viable option for the coalition- we wholeheartedly support this option. Following the Me Too Movement and the spike in violence due to Covid, the world is ready. In diplomatic meetings, we consistently hear this is the obvious path forward. The only question now is which nation will plant the flag and boldly lead the way forward.

Q.7 How do you see the Every Women Treaty goals in relation to other efforts to end violence against women?

A global treaty to end violence against women and girls will turbo charge all other efforts to end this violence. It is entirely complimentary. Look, experts agree on the key interventions required to stop this violence:

1. Legal reform
2. Training for security, justice and medical sectors
3. Services for survivors
4. Prevention education
5. Data to track government implementation of these interventions
6. Money- we are calling for a tenfold increase in international funding, to 4 billion dollars per year.

Q.8 You have been a success story despite a world that is still to accept ending violence against women as a norm. What would you say is a key element to your success? How have you managed to stay so strong?

I thank you for this, but I do not feel like a success. Until the treaty drafted with the strongest possible language, ratified by every nation on earth, and implemented to the highest possible degree in all nations, the struggle continues.

It is hard to make peace with this. I think this is true of most activists. So I try to focus on what I can do. I can show up every day, act strategically, and give it my all. I can listen. I can partner with activist-experts far more knowledgeable than myself. And I can support their global voices for change. And these days, try to take care of my body while I do this so I can keep showing up for decades to come. That has to be enough. The rest is out of my hands.

Q.9 You are known to believe in building communities by strengthening the women, "stronger women for stronger nations". What makes your belief in this motto so certain? Do you feel men can plug in - in all the ways like women to end violence against women? How do you see role of men in this movement?

First, I don't need to "believe" in strong women creating stronger nations- the data is very clear on this! The facts speak for themselves. In terms of the role of men in ending violence against women, it is essential. It is one of our core values. We embrace and celebrate the male leaders around the world who put their own lives on the line to end this violence. Men like Dr. Morrissanda Kouyate, who has dedicated his whole life to ending this violence. More of these men, please!

Q.10. Why do you feel all the efforts that people put into development, education, women's empowerment, and economic opportunity are being squashed when women are not physically safe?

Safety is fundamental. I can't tell you how many women I've interviewed in the DRC who had to choose between feeding their families by heading to the fields, or stay home to avoid being raped. A huge percentage of girls globally won't use the bathroom at school because it isn't safe. Violence against women costs us all 5 percent of the global economy per year. That's 1200 US dollars per female on earth! Yet internationally, we only spend about 11 cents per female on earth to stop it. It makes no sense. It's not logical.

Q.11 What has been your biggest hurdle since embarking on the mission to end violence against women? Where do you see yourself going from today? Do you feel there will be an end to your role in this quest? What do you hope your legacy will be?

The vast majority of human beings do not approve of this. The biggest hurdle to ending violence against women and girls is the erroneous belief that it is sad but inevitable. That there are too many hurdles to overcome to do so, now at least. Later, maybe. When the time is right. When the world has changed. Even women's rights advocates cleave to this

belief. And it is that failure to see the possibility right in front of us that costs billions of women their safety and lives.

This movement is filled with the most extraordinary, ordinary human beings. So brave, so bold. My only hope is to support them, their voices and vision, on the global stage. So the world listens to them. They are the experts. They are the catalysts. I hope my legacy is just being among them. And that together we can spark the leadership required to deliver lives free from violence for every woman and girl, everywhere.

Q.12. Why do you feel people do not come out and speak despite their support for ending violence against women? What holds them back to get involved?

There are a lot of people involved in this movement, and they do come out, speak up, and get involved! What stops those who don't? Overwhelm. Lack of belief in what is possible.



Q.13 Given your immense learnings from your experience of starting as a single voice to a worldwide coalition to end violence against women, what is your key message to all young women and men considering getting involved in this or other movements to change the wrongs of the world?

Every single one of us has the power to change the world. Don't wait to be perfect. News flash: You are a human being. You will never know everything, have all the skills. No one will tap you on the shoulder and say *Now is your time to lead*. Listen. Learn. Partner. Leap.

Farewell

UN Women bids farewell to Phumzile Mlambo- Ngcuka



Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka completed her second and last term as United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women on 17 August 2021, after eight years at the helm of the organization.

Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka joined UN Women as Executive Director in 2013, when the Entity was just two years old. Under her leadership, UN Women significantly increased its influence within and outside the UN system, expanded its partnerships, achieved more focused impact at scale, and more than doubled in size and revenue. Women’s voices on and offline have been raised in unprecedented scale and with impact on issues central to equality and empowerment, as have those of a broadened range of allies and advocates. In addition to her unwavering support for civil society and women’s organizations, Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka brought in new advocates with emphasis on engaging youth, men and boys, traditional and cultural leaders, the private sector, philanthropies and the world of sport. She was also a strong supporter of a more coherent, accountable and coordinated UN system, working together to achieve gender equality.

Congratulations

Warm Welcome to Pramila Patten, Under-Secretary-General as Officer-in-Charge of UN Women

The United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres has appointed Under-Secretary-General Pramila Patten as Officer-in-Charge of UN Women, effective 18 August 2021.

Under-Secretary-General Pramila Patten Photo: Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict Ms. Patten, who has since April 2017 served as the United Nations Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, will lead UN Women during the transition period to the incumbency of the next Executive Director, succeeding Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka after her eight-year tenure.



Ms. Patten has deep experience in the field of gender equality and women’s empowerment, including service as a member of the Committee on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) from 2003 to 2017. She was the Chairperson of the Working Group on General Recommendation No. 30 on “Women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations”. She has been a member of several high-level panels and projects, including the High-Level Advisory Group for the


“Global study on the implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security”, and the Advisory Panel for the African Women’s Rights Observatory (AWRO) within the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA).

A national of Mauritius, Ms. Patten has been a practicing lawyer since 1982 and a member of the Honourable Society of Gray’s Inn. She also served as an Adviser in the Ministry of Women’s Rights, Child Development and Family Welfare of Mauritius from 2000 to 2004.

Gender at the United Nations



Generation Equality Forum concludes in Paris with Announcement of Revolutionary Commitments and Global Acceleration Plan to Advance Gender Equality by 2026



The Generation Equality Forum took place in Mexico City in March and in Paris from 30 June – 2 July 2021, engaging nearly 50,000 people, which featured over 110 events over 3 days, hosted via an online platform. The Forum was opened by the co-hosts, President of France, Emmanuel Macron and Mexico's President, Andrés Manuel López Obrador, as well as by UN Secretary-General António Guterres and convener of the Forum, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director of UN Women. The ceremony was centred on the voice of civil society activists and women's rights defenders and featured long-term advocate for gender equality and Former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in an intergenerational dialogue with climate activist Julieta Martinez.

The Forum launched a **Global Acceleration Plan for Gender Equality- a 5-year action journey** to achieve irreversible progress towards gender equality, founded on a series of concrete, ambitious and transformative actions, including \$40 Billion in financial commitments. The Forum also launched a Compact on Women, Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action, and announced new gender equality initiatives focused on health, sports, culture, and education

The Forum's bold, action-oriented agenda will be under-written by nearly 40 billion USD of confirmed investments as well as ambitious policy and programme commitments from governments, philanthropy, civil society, youth organizations and the private sector. The monumental conclusion comes at a critical moment as the world assesses the disproportionate and negative impact that COVID-19 has had on women and girls. Gender equality advocates have pressed for gender-responsive stimulus and recovery plans to ensure that women and girls are not left behind as the world re-builds. The 40 billion USD of investments confirmed at the Forum's close represent a major step-change in resourcing for women's and girls' rights.

Recordings of the sessions are available for viewing on the online platform and all the recordings will available on the Generation Equality Forum YouTube channel.

UN Women will maintain a critical role driving the Forum's 5-year action journey, ensuring robust monitoring and accountability for implementation of the commitments made, including through dedicated internal capacity.

See more at:

<https://forum.generationequality.org/generation-equality-forum-paris>

<https://forum.generationequality.org/news/generation-equality-forum-concludes-paris-announcement-revolutionary-commitments-and-global>

High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development

The [High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development \(HLPF\)](#) is the main United Nations platform for follow-up and review of the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#). The HLPF provides political leadership, guidance, and recommendations for sustainable development. It reviews progress in the implementation of the [2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#), with the aim to integrate the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

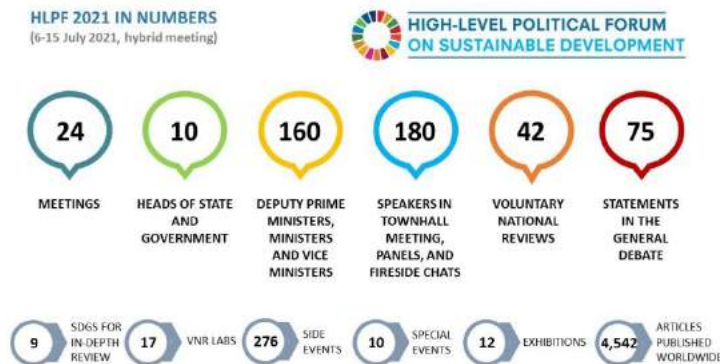
In 2021, the HLPF under the auspices of ECOSOC was held on 6–15 July under the theme “**Sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic that promotes the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development: Building an inclusive and effective path for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in the context of the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development**”.

Participants highlighted increased poverty rates and hunger, decreased number of children in school, job losses, increased debt burdens, growing inequalities, along with increased human rights violations—all linked to the COVID-19 pandemic. Yet at the same time, many said the solutions exist to recover and build back better. Panelists focused on the importance of social protection systems, sustainable agriculture, digitization, creating new debt relief and financing architecture, and stronger partnerships between civil society, the private sector, governments and the international community, among others, as the way to get back on track.

The Forum reviewed progress on the following SDGs:

- SDG 1: No poverty
- SDG 2: Zero hunger
- SDG 3: Good health and well-being
- SDG 8: Decent work and economic growth
- SDG 10: Reduced inequalities
- SDG 12: Responsible consumption and production
- SDG 13: Climate action
- SDG 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions

- SDG 17: Partnerships



The 2021 HLPF included more than 276 side events, ten special events and high-level launches of reports, 17 VNR labs, and 12 virtual exhibitions. Nine Heads of State and Government, more than 100 Deputy Prime Ministers, Ministers and Vice-Ministers, and over 190 other speakers participated in town hall meetings, panels and fireside chats. The 2021 HLPF convened in a hybrid format (both virtual and at UN Headquarters) from 6-15 July 2021.

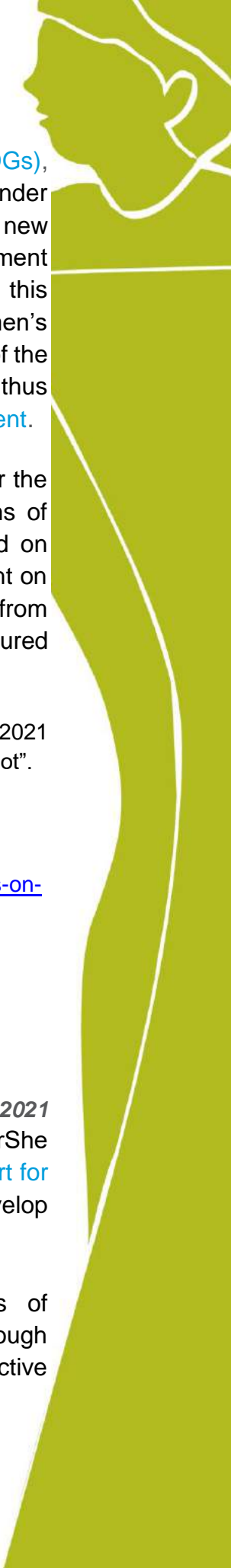
See more at: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/how-we-work/intergovernmental-support/hlpf-on-sustainable-development>

<https://enb.iisd.org/sdgs/HLPF2021/summary>

Path to equal: New measurement framework on gender equality and women’s empowerment

UN Women and UNDP have prepared a new measurement framework for gender equality and women’s empowerment that helps diagnose root causes of structural gender inequality, and their relevance for the preparation of Voluntary National Reviews.

UN Women organized a VNR lab titled “Path to equal: New Measurement Framework on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment” on 15 July 2021 on the sidelines of the HLPF.



As only nine years remain to achieve the [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#), greater efforts are needed to diagnose the root causes of structural gender inequality, identify game-changers, and spur further commitments. A new measurement framework for gender equality and women’s empowerment developed by UN Women and UNDP is set to provide a powerful tool for this pursuit. It illustrates a country’s status in achieving gender equality and women’s empowerment through a dashboard of indicators. The dimensions and most of the indicators selected for quantifying the dimensions are SDG indicators and thus complement the policy efforts of the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#).

This lab highlighted some of the findings from this work and its relevance for the preparation of VNRs, particularly in their assessment of the different forms of discrimination that women and girls face and their impact on society, and on accelerating progress in achieving the SDGs. The findings also put a spotlight on intersectionality through a comparison of outcomes for women and girls from different wealth/income quintiles for more than 100 countries. It also featured speakers from Member States, including from national statistical offices.

UN Women and the United Nations Statistics Division will launch in September 2021 2021 edition of the “Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals: The gender snapshot”.

See more at:

<https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/events/2021/07/event-path-to-equal-new-indices-on-gender-equality-and-womens-empowerment>

Launch of the guidelines for gender-responsive sports organizations

Guidelines for gender-responsive sports organizations were launched in June 2021 in Turkey. The guidelines have been developed under the UN Women’s HeForShe movement in Turkey—a trail-blazing effort to translate the UN Women’s [Sport for Generation Equality](#) principles into a step-by-step guide on how to develop strategies and translate them into concrete and measurable actions.

The guidelines are structured to help sports organizations in terms of empowerment of women and girls and advancement of gender equality through concrete and quantifiable actions and indicators. They offer a simple, effective

roadmap to mobilize action on gender equality in day-to-day and overall operations.

The sports community has an important role to play to tear down gender barriers and discrimination and to empower women and girls, both in the world of sport and beyond.

See more at:

<https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/events/2021/06/event-launch-of-the-guidelines-for-gender-responsive-sports-organizations>

UN Women Executive Board convenes annual session 2021

The [UN Women Executive Board](#) convened for this year's annual session from Monday 21 June 2021 to Wednesday 23 June 2021, remotely via the Zoom Platform.

The President of the Executive Board, Alie Kabba, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone to the United Nations, opened the Session. UN Women Executive Director, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, addressed the session, which included updates on the COVID-19 response and the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review of Operational Activities for Development (QCPR).

Over the three days, the Executive Board received briefings on the draft Strategic Plan 2022-2025 and on the draft integrated budget estimates of UN Women for the biennium 2022–2023. The Board further considered reports of the UN Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women on the implementation of the Strategic Plan 2018–2021; the evaluation function of UN Women in 2020; the corporate evaluation of UN Women's coordination and convening role in ending violence against women; the internal audit and investigation activities for the period of 1 January to 31 December 2020; the report of the Advisory Committee on Oversight for the period of 1 January to 31 December 2020; and UN Women's related management responses.

See more at:

<https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2021/6/announcer-executive-board-to-convene-annual-session-2021>



Celebrities and world leaders convene at UN Women's global HeForShe Summit

In the context of COVID-19 where gender inequalities have been exacerbated through a disproportional negative impact on millions of women and girls, HeForShe Champions convened at the virtual HeForShe Summit in May 2021 to release their tried and tested methods that aim to accelerate positive progress.

Over the last six years, a unique group of 35 world leaders across government, business and academia made over 90 commitments to address some of today's most pressing gender issues. Known as *HeForShe* Champions, part of UN Women's HeForShe initiative, they are Presidents, Prime Ministers, CEOs and academic leaders.

Convening as part of the global ChangeNOW online event, these HeForShe Champions shared their journey and their Proven Solutions: innovative and concrete ways to eliminate global gender issues.

Each HeForShe Champion joined the initiative by making ambitious commitments designed to accelerate progress towards gender equality. At the HeForShe Summit, they released the culmination of these commitments: their Proven Solutions.

Engaging Tomorrow's Leaders: To address the gender gap in STEM, US-based Stony Brook University's Women in Science and Engineering (WISE) program offers a recruitment, retention and partnership plan. WISE has expanded the number of women in its incoming cohort by 25 per cent.

Ending Gender-Based Violence: HeForShe Champion Vodafone became the first company to offer 10 days' paid leave to domestic-abuse victims across all their territories. Their Bright Sky app also provides critical support services to around 100,000 survivors of abuse.

Pursuing Economic Justice: With a persistent global gender pay gap of around 23 per cent, Head of State Champion Iceland developed a groundbreaking new Equal Pay Certification that requires companies of 25 employees or more to undergo an audit ensuring equal pay for equal work.

In a joint collaboration between *HeForShe*, YPO and the Financial Times, the Summit also saw the release of a unique Global Chief Executive Gender Equality Survey fielded to

uncover groundbreaking insights about the journey women and men take to the corner office. Complete survey results can be found on the HeForShe and YPO websites.

See more at: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2021/5/press-release-heforshe-summit>

Launch of the UN Trust Fund Strategic Plan 2021-2025

‘Focusing on women’s rights and civil society organizations’

The UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women’s (UN Trust Fund) Strategic Plan 2021-2025 is grounded in the right of all women and girls to live free of violence. It seeks to achieve this goal through global solidarity and partnerships that enable civil society organizations, especially women’s rights organizations, to deliver survivor-centered and demand-driven initiatives to help feminist movements grow globally.

The new Strategic Plan is based on extensive consultations with stakeholders, donors and grantees, who called for key details including:

- increased flexible funding and more grants that cover longer periods;
- opportunities to pilot and test innovative approaches to ending violence against women and girls;
- increased resources to support and build the capacity of civil society organizations and women’s rights organizations; and
- more space for knowledge-sharing, learning and dialogue among grantees.

See more at:

<https://untf.unwomen.org/en/news-and-events/stories/2021/05/launch-of-the-un-trust-fund-strategic-plan-20212025>



Gender around the world

Artists around the world share their visions on gender equality



In the run up to the [2021 Generation Equality Forum](#) —artists globally visualized what gender equality means to them. [More than 1000 inspirational submissions](#) from creative advocates all over the world, each with its own vision of a gender equal future. We share below, some of our top picks and learn why these artists joined us to [#ActForEqual](#).

See more at:



<https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2021/6/what-does-gender-equality-look-like>

Women CEOs of the S&P 500 (List)

This list names all the women who currently hold CEO positions at S&P 500 companies, based on the January 2021 S&P 500 list.* Women currently hold 30 (6.0%) of CEO positions at those S&P 500 companies.

See more at:

<https://www.catalyst.org/research/women-ceos-of-the-sp-500/>

Suggested Readings

Launch of Report on the Generation equality Mexico Forum



UN Women and the Government of Mexico have launched a comprehensive outcomes report of the Generation Equality Forum in Mexico. The Mexico City Forum was held 29 to 31 March 2021 as the kick off to the Generation Equality Forum journey. The report presents an overview of the Forum in Mexico City, including an executive summary of the Forum proceedings, its substantive and cultural agenda, and the recommendations made by the Forum participants. The report also provides an overview of the launch of the Action Coalitions blueprints, the catalytic commitments for gender equality, the Group of Friends for Gender Equality launch, the Youth and civil society leaders 2026 vision, and a common feminist pathway.

The brief multimedia version of the report with direct access to the Forum's assets through YouTube is available at: <http://forogeneracionigualdad.mx/report2021>

The full report in PDF format can be downloaded [here](#).

Guidance note: Preventing violence against women in politics

This guidance note on preventing violence against women in politics provides technical advice to UN Women and country teams on how they can support Member States to address violence against women in politics, an internationally recognized violation of, and deterrent to, women's political participation.

The guidance note focuses on women in politics but it applies to violence against women in public life more broadly, including that perpetrated against women human rights defenders, journalists, and those active in civil society and other areas of public life.

View online/download

- [Publication \(PDF, 469KB\)](#)

Corporate evaluation of UN Women's UN system coordination and broader convening role in ending violence against women



UN Women works to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls (VAWG), increase access to services for survivors, and make private and public spaces safer for women and girls.

In 2021, the Independent Evaluation Service conducted the corporate evaluation of UN Women's UN system coordination and broader convening role in ending violence against women as part of its implementation of the UN Women Corporate Evaluation Plan. The evaluation provides an overall assessment of UN Women's UN system coordination and broader convening role in the area of ending violence against women and includes a forward-looking analysis with a view to informing UN Women's Strategic Plan 2022–2025.

View online/download

- [Evaluation report \(PDF, 1.4MB\)](#)

Website

Women of Aviation Week – iWOAW

Women of Aviation is a global aviation awareness week for girls of all ages to observed to mark the anniversary of the world’s first female pilot license March 8, 1910. The week is a call to address gender imbalances in the air and space industry.

See at:

https://womenofaviationweek.iwoaw.org/?gclid=CjwKCAiAh_GNBhAHEiwAjOh3ZBq2HsYAHsrYqxlF8GGY1BwnjEi264EP3f7DVZe34gkuNicHkgEuthoC960QAvD_BwE

UN Women Info

Employment opportunities

You can find a monthly list of vacancy announcements at:

<http://www.unwomen.org/about-us/employment>

You can read Network online at: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/how-we-work/un-system-coordination/coordination-resources>

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