



IN BRIEF



## WOMEN IN POLICY, PEACEKEEPING AND LEADERSHIP

India. Photo: UN Women India

### THE ISSUE

*In intergovernmental forums at the United Nations, Member States come together to debate and seek agreement on global gender equality norms and standards. These commitments offer the basis for action by Governments and other stakeholders to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment at the global, regional and national levels. They provide impetus for adopting and enhancing laws, policies and programmes that bring about equality between women and men.*

Conflicts, including war or terrorism or violent extremism, have a devastating effect on women and girls, and yet, women are largely missing from conflict resolution processes and security efforts. UN Women is committed to the Women, Peace and Security agenda around the world.

### OUR SOLUTION

UN Women in India has adopted a multi-pronged approach to advance the goal of gender equality through interventions that support the formulation of gender policies and norms at par with global standards. Our Inter-governmental Processes (IGP) programme works with the Government of India in supporting an enabling environment necessary for the fulfillment of India's international commitments to advance the goal of gender equality.

Through the Generation Equality Forum (GEF) initiative, we provide a platform for dialogue and action on gender-based issues.

Our support to global peacekeeping efforts has ensured that women play a decisive leadership role in UN humanitarian and peacekeeping efforts.

UN Women has an important role in working across the UN in India, supporting and coordinating the UN system's work in support of gender equality and the empowerment of women.

### TOWARDS FULFILLMENT OF INDIA'S GLOBAL COMMITMENTS

UN Women supports interventions led by the Government of India and the State Governments for women's leadership development and increased participation in decision-making and for their social protection.

In India, UN Women has worked with NITI Aayog, the Government of India's policy think tank, to draft the gender chapter for Vision Document 2047. We supported a participatory approach to the preparation of the second Voluntary National Review (VNR) on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This is a periodic assessment of India's overall contribution to meeting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Over 600 women's rights groups from across the country were mobilized for the national consultation to review progress on the Beijing Platform for Action (Beijing+25) that set the global feminist agenda in 1995. The consultation informed India's reporting on Gender for the Second Voluntary National Review. The Review was presented by the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India in July 2020 at the UN High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) 2020.

UN Women is supporting the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) in setting the gender agenda through technical support and evidence building for the 2023 G20 Summit in India.

Most recently, UN Women has worked with the United National Country Team -- comprised of all UN entities in India -- to develop the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework that will guide the UN's support to India between 2022-2027. UN Women is the focal point for the Resident Coordinator on developing a system to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse by any UN entity representative, contractor or implementing partner. This work is led by the UN Secretary General and entails intensive training for staff, contractors and implementing partners. Over 320 implementing partners have been trained and all staff have attended 'town halls' to ensure they are fully aware of our joint obligations to prevent this kind of exploitation. UN Women has also worked with the Resident Coordinator to establish a grievance mechanism so complaints can be investigated.

### A PLATFORM FOR GENDER DIALOGUE

In 2021, the global Generation Equality Forum was launched by UN Women and the Government of Mexico, to accelerate achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 5 on Gender Equality. UN Women India, a national convener of GEF in the country, serves as a knowledge hub and an ally of civil society and women's rights organisations in their participation in the GEF Forum.

The Generation Equality Forum in India has mobilised a new generation of feminist advocates who are beginning to take on the feminist leadership. In the recent past, the next-gen youth leaders from India had their voices heard on crucial issues of gender and caste-based discrimination at the 'Generation Equality: Young Feminist Unconference', held ahead of the high-level Gender Equality Forum in Paris in June 2021, where youth curated a panel, "Young Feminists Against Caste: An Action Agenda".

*I grew up in India, in an environment where you see gender disparity around you everywhere, but I was also brought up in a supportive, inter-caste and cosmopolitan environment at home that was very gender equal. I believed that if my family can create a nurturing environment, I should be able to do the same - Jeevika Shiv, lawyer and social worker, India.*

A member of the Women in Criminal Law Association WCLA, Jeevika serves as a National Youth Gender Activist from India for UN Women. She works on the gender equality agenda with marginalised communities including tribal people and the rural poor, with a focus on building grassroots feminist leadership, legal systems, livelihoods, governance, social security and justice.

## WOMEN IN PEACEKEEPING

Since 2015, UN Women has been supporting the Government of India's Centre for UN Peacekeeping (CUNPK) in running the Female Military Officers' Course for military officers from 25 countries. The course is designed to help peacekeepers understand their mandate and rules of engagement in line with the obligations of the United Nations, including Security Council Resolution 1325. This Resolution calls for more women peace-makers, more women in peace building efforts and protection of women and girls in conflict zones.

India is one of the biggest contributors to peacekeeping. It is one of the select few hosts for advancing women's participation and leadership roles within peacekeeping through its flagship programme, the Female Military Officers' Course. India is one of the select field offices of UN Women involved in on-the-ground execution of this initiative. The training modules introduce the officers to the prevailing socio-cultural, political and security situation in the countries where they are to be deployed. The courses have helped increase the numbers of Indian female military observers in peace-keeping missions from 3 per cent in 2015 to 15 per cent in 2020.

Within the country, these courses have equipped the internal security organizations such as the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and the Border Security Force (BSF) with tools to address Conflict-related Sexual Violence and Gender-responsive Community Development among the para-military forces.

*"The presence of female peacekeepers positively impacts the confidence of the local population; the reporting of gender-based violence increases; and in fact, my troops become role models for the local girls," says Seema Dhundia, Deputy Inspector General of the Central Reserve Police Force in Chandigarh Union Territory, north of New Delhi. She was the commander of the world's first all-female UN peacekeeping force that was dispatched to Liberia.*

## PARTNERS FOR CHANGE

- Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD)
- Ministry of Defence (MoD)
- Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)
- NITI Aayog
- National Alliance of Women's Organisation (NAWO)
- Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF)
- Partners for Change
- Ford Foundation
- Gender at Work India Trust
- Breakthrough India
- Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability
- Best Practice Foundation









## ABOUT US

UN Women is the United Nations entity dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women. It works with governments and civil society to design laws, policies, programmes and services needed to ensure that the standards are effectively implemented and truly benefit women and girls worldwide. It works globally to make the vision of the Sustainable Development Goals a reality for women and girls and stands behind women's equal participation in all aspects of life, focusing on four strategic priorities;

- Women lead, participate in and benefit equally from governance systems
- Women have income security, decent work and economic autonomy
- All women and girls live a life free from all forms of violence
- Women and girls contribute to and have greater influence in building sustainable peace and resilience, and benefit equally from the prevention of natural disasters and conflicts and humanitarian action.

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