

GEAR

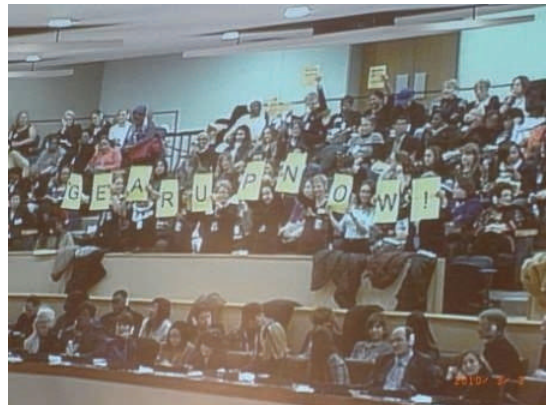
gender/equality/architecture/reform

THE GEAR CAMPAIGN TRANSITIONAL TOOLKIT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

The GEAR Campaign is a network of over 300 women's, human rights and social justice groups around the world that have been working for over four years to gain UN Member States and UN Secretariat approval for creation of a larger more coherent coordinated UN agency that can advance further the UN's mandate of working for gender equality as a crucial component of development, human rights, humanitarian concerns, peace and security.

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March 2010 GEAR advocates stand to move the process forward as Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary General speaks at the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW).

This Toolkit was developed by the
GEAR Campaign Working Group

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<http://www.gearcampaign.org> ~ gearcampaign@gmail.com

CIVIL SOCIETY CALL TO ACTION

Created on July 2, 2010, UN Women is the result of years of advocacy by civil society. The new entity combines the mandates of the four existing UN structures for women into one new, higher level UN organization with both policy and operational functions. The GEAR Campaign, a network of over 300 women's, human rights and social justice groups, engaged in working to ensure that UN Women will be a coordinated, strong, and strategic organization that further advances the UN's work on gender equality and women's empowerment. Some organizations are already engaged with the UN transition process at the national and regional levels, and the GEAR Campaign encourages more actors in civil society to get involved in ensuring that UN Women realize its potential as a powerful vehicle for advancing women's rights on the ground.

The campaign recommends the following next steps for civil society engagement:

ESTABLISH MEANINGFUL, SYSTEMATIC, AND DIVERSE CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION

In the months leading up to January 1st, 2011, the official date UN Women becomes fully functional, civil society should be part of developing effective policies, practices, and leadership for the entity. To be effective, UN Women must develop creative ways to engage with a diverse NGO constituency. UN country teams should draw upon the knowledge of civil society groups.

Action: Civil society organizations can initiate meetings with NGO networks and UN staff (Resident Coordinators as well as gender focal points and other relevant actors) in national and regional offices to strengthen and build mechanisms for civil society engagement with the UN through the new entity.

DEMAND A DYNAMIC AND RELEVANT AGENDA FOR UN WOMEN

The new entity begins with the mandates and work of UNIFEM, DAW, OSAGI, and INSTRAW, but if it is to become more than the sum of its parts, it must go further.

Action: Civil society organizations working on various issues such as violence against women, economic and political empowerment, land, housing, and other human rights, including sexual and reproductive rights, can analyze and suggest how UN Women can improve the work of the UN both through its own programming and in coordinating with the larger UN system. NGOs are already working closely with UN agencies like UNIFEM or UNFPA or with UN country teams.

PRESSURE DONORS TO AIM FOR \$1 BILLION IN FUNDING AND TO MEET THEIR COMMITMENT TO "CORE, MULTI-YEAR, PREDICTABLE, STABLE AND SUSTAINABLE" CONTRIBUTIONS

For UN Women to have a significant global impact, it must have the financial resources that UNIFEM, OSAGI, INSTRAW and DAW consistently lacked.

Action: Civil society groups should continue or initiate conversations with governments about setting funding goals for UN Women and demand that targets are met.

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SEEK POWERFUL, CAPABLE AND EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP AT EVERY LEVEL

The governing board of UN Women, made up of 41 elected Member States, has been decided. Now we must ensure that the Executive Board supports UN Women in every way possible and reflects the concerns of women on the ground in setting the priorities for UN Women.

Action: Civil society should advocate for effective and accountable leaders at the regional and country levels who will have considerable influence over activities on-the-ground and the opportunity to develop innovative agendas for UN Women.

[Read the full [Civil Society Call to Action](#)]

GEAR TIMELINE: A PRECEDENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY ENGAGEMENT IN UN WOMEN

Civil society and women's organizations in particular have historically played an integral part in the formation of UN agencies that focus on gender equality and women's empowerment. Thus, the GEAR Campaign undoubtedly played a key role in creating UN Women. The following timeline summarizes the GEAR Campaign's contributions to the UN gender equality architecture reform.

2005: At the World Summit, a collective call for UN Reform launched an agenda which addressed human rights and peace. In light of the fact that gender equality architecture was not clearly targeted, women's rights groups began to organize and demand that the UN reform process reflect gender perspectives and further advance the gender equality and women's rights agenda.

2006: UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan called for a Panel to work on UN System-wide Coherence in three thematic areas - development, humanitarian assistance, and the environment. Gender was included in the analysis as a "cross-cutting theme." Women's rights and civil society organizations provided concrete recommendations to the Panel on gender equality architecture reform including the creation of a well-resourced, women-specific independent entity that would be a body with normative, operational and oversight capacity, a universal country presence and led by an Under-Secretary General. Panel recommendations included the suggestions from civil society. Women's civil society groups also signed a petition at the Commission for the Status of Women to get gender on the Panel's agenda.



2006 GEAR Representatives met with former UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan to discuss gender equality architecture reform (GEAR).

2007: The Secretary-General's report included the proposal to form a consolidated gender equality entity which would have a strengthened normative and advocacy role combined with a targeted programming role and be fully and ambitiously funded. When there was inaction on the part of the General Assembly and Member States, women's civil society groups mobilized their constituencies and lobbied governments to support the process of UN gender equality architecture reform.

2008-2009: The network of women's, social justice and human rights organizations officially started operating as the GEAR Campaign at the 2008 Commission on the Status of Women and coined the phrase "Building a United Nations that really works for all women - Campaign for stronger gender equality architecture reform (GEAR)". The working group was strategically organized with global and regional focal points who mobilized at global, local and regional levels along with an additional NY lobbying group. The GEAR Campaign was officially launched on March 2008. Multiple position papers were developed by the GEAR Campaign, along with linkage caucuses co-facilitated by CWGL (Center for Global Women's Leadership at Rutgers University) and WEDO (Women's Environment and Development Organization) during the 2008 and 2009 CSW. These efforts were instrumental in raising the momentum towards reforming UN gender equality architecture.



July 2010 Servitas Cameroon hosted an event on GEAR.

2010: A year of great successes for women globally, Member States, and especially civil society organizations. Years of lobbying and advocacy efforts finally paid off as the GEAR Campaign witnessed its concrete input materialize into UN Women, an entity poised to be responsive and accountable to the needs of the 21st century women's movement.

QUESTIONS TO KEEP IN MIND AS YOU WORK TO SHAPE UN WOMEN'S AGENDA

- ◆ What are the pressing issues of your organizations and how do they relate to UN Women?
- ◆ What activities can UN Women undertake to be active on the ground?
- ◆ How would you like to engage with UN Women?
- ◆ Why is it important that UN Women focus on certain issue areas?
- ◆ What is the history of the specific focus of your demand and what are the next steps in your region and/or globally?

HOW TO GET ORGANIZED: EXAMPLES FROM THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

UN Women can improve the work of the UN on gender equality and women's empowerment, both through programming and more coherent coordination with the larger UN system. At this moment, women's rights, grassroots women's organizations and civil society must be proactive in defining UN Women's content agenda. Now is the time for civil society organizations to voice their visions and specific issue areas of focus for UN Women.

At the regional, national, and local levels, civil society groups can discuss and propose priorities for the work of UN Women in their thematic and geographic areas. The women's movement in Latin America held this discussion at the recent regional meeting on women and gender held as part of the 15-year review of the Beijing Platform for Action by ECLAC in Brazil, where they issued a statement and advocated with both governments and UN personnel on UN Women's work with civil society in the region. [Read the [ECLAC B+15 Statement](#)]

For example, in Pakistan, women's rights groups have actively participated in the GEAR Campaign and in the long struggle to make the UN system more responsive and accountable to women. Following the July 2010 UNGA Resolution, women's rights activists and 12 NNGOs¹ formed a Civil Society Alliance (CSA) on UN Women through a nationwide consultation process. [Read the [Pakistani Civil Society Alliance on UN Women](#)]

What are the practical examples of civil society engagement?

TOOLS TO SHAPE UN WOMEN'S AGENDA

This is not, by any means, an exhaustive list of UN tools, but rather a starting point to develop new visions for UN Women.

[Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women \(CEDAW\)](#): CEDAW, a legally binding treaty, defines what constitutes discrimination against women and sets up an agenda for national action to end such discrimination. Review CEDAW civil society shadow reports as a resource for advocacy efforts. These reports can present an overview of the most pressing issues in any country and can be powerful tools in determining country-level priorities and assist in setting the agenda for UN Women.

[Beijing Platform for Action \(BPfA\)](#): The BPfA represents the most comprehensive women's rights framework and addresses 12 critical areas of concerns including: women and poverty, education and training of women, women and health, violence against women, women and armed conflict, women and the economy, women in power and decision-making, institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women, human rights of women, women and the media, women and the environment, and the girl-child. Use the BPfA as a foundation for your organizational demands and go beyond to ensure that UN Women works in the 21st century. Also check out the Beijing Platform for Action's [five-year Review in 2000](#), [ten-year Review in 2005](#), and [15-year Review in 2010](#).

[UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820](#): The UN Security Council Resolution marked the first occasion on which the Security Council specifically recognized women's vital role in conflict prevention, resolution and peace-building. UNSCR 1325 also notes the particular impact of conflict on women, including sexual gender-based violence. The resolution requests that the UN Secretary-General reports on the progress of gender mainstreaming in UN peacekeeping work. In 2008, the UN Security Council also adopted Resolution 1820, which more specifically addresses sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict situations.



2009 FEIM regional meeting in Panama, which included a discussion about the GEAR Campaign.

[Millennium Development Goals \(MDGs\)](#): These goals, which all 191 Member States have pledged to meet by 2015, include: Eradicating extreme hunger and poverty; Achieving universal primary education; Promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women; Drastically reducing child mortality; Improving maternal health; Combating the spread of HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other deadly diseases; Ensuring environmental sustainability; and Establishing a global partnership for development. Focus on how UN Women can ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment is reflected in each goal.

FIRST 100 DAYS OF UN WOMEN: WHAT CAN YOU DO?

UN Women is looking now at what it can do in the first 100 days (beginning with January 1, 2011) to achieve some “quick impact” and/ or signal significant directions for its work. Civil society, especially women’s national and grassroots organizations, can participate in this by offering practical examples of what UN Women can do and be at each level. We suggest doing this by:

- ◆ Recommending early actions that could be taken during the first 100 days of UN Women to demonstrate its new direction;
- ◆ Providing input or recommendations to shape what early successes in UN Women might look like;
- ◆ Organizing meetings of civil society groups with local and regional UN staff (such as resident coordinators, gender focal points, previous UNIFEM staff, etc.) to discuss the directions and structures of UN Women’s work at national and regional levels.

This can provide GEAR Campaign members with a critical entry-point to start practically influencing UN Women’s agenda and an opportunity to demonstrate how civil society engagement is effective and necessary.

We welcome and encourage CSO’s and grassroots organizations to hold such meetings locally, nationally, regionally and/or globally by geographic or thematic interests. It will be useful if you can submit to the UN (at any level) as well as share with GEAR any concrete ideas that your organization would propose to UN Women for the first 100 days. The recommendations should be as specific as possible and aim at **interventions/tangible examples that can demonstrate:**

- ◆ **Process:** an example of how to effectively engage with civil society,
- ◆ **Product:** a short-term tangible (albeit symbolic) result,
- ◆ **Agenda setting:** provides a direction to guide longer-term work on a given thematic area.

ON-GOING & LONG TERM SUGGESTIONS FOR UN WOMEN

UN Women will also begin a longer term strategic planning process in January 2011 and seeks stakeholder participation in this. Civil society and grassroots organizations need to be proactive about being in touch with UN Women at every level.

A number of national, regional and thematic groups are already taking such action and making proposals for UN Women’s structures and direction. We suggest that groups reflect on their work, joint initiatives or conferences and meetings, etc. and identify innovative interventions and issues where UN Women can make a difference with ‘quick impact’ and/or longer term strategies moving forward. We need to go beyond what others should do and offer recommendations that your organization is willing to work towards and help implement.

Civil Society has a rare opportunity to participate in building a new UN body for gender equality and women’s empowerment and GEAR calls on all civil society groups committed to these goals to pro-actively engage in this process. **We encourage you to send your ideas to all the relevant national, regional, and global UN actors directly and to engage with them where possible. Please also send this information to the GEAR Campaign (email: gearcampaign@gmail.com) by the first week of December. We will then review, consolidate and provide this information to the USG in mid-December as well.**

The GEAR Campaign has provided civil society with an outlet to attain the most relevant information about a UN process that has at times been less than transparent.

- Regional focal point

[Read the full [Civil Society Engagement Paper](#)]

RESOURCES FOR CONTACTING LOCAL UN OFFICES

Contact your country's resident coordinator and/or gender theme team or UN Country Team Office to request a meeting with UN Women.

Tips for reaching out to country offices:

- ◆ Introduce your organization by attaching an explanation of the CSO's activities and some materials;
- ◆ Before contacting them, review the websites and find out what the agency does;
- ◆ If they make the first contact, always send information;
- ◆ Invite them to visit your office and/or to your activities;
- ◆ Ask if there is a way your organization can participate in, contribute to, or support the Gender Theme Group or Gender Theme Extension Group if one exists.

[Retrieve [UN Contacts](#)]

MEDIA, PRESS & HISTORICAL MATERIALS

GEAR and UN Women in the Media

- ◆ **September 14, 2010:** [Chile's Bachelet to head new UN women's entity](#), Patrick Worsnip, *Reuters*. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon announced the appointment of former Chilean President Michelle Bachelet on Tuesday to head a new U.N. body that will seek to improve the lives of women and girls around the world.
- ◆ **August 3, 2010:** [Hopes are high as the United Nations launches an agency for women](#), Brigitte Perucca, *Guardian*. UN's new agency for women will tackle a range of issues, from education and training, healthcare and workplace discrimination, to inequality in the political arena
- ◆ **July 6, 2010:** [After 65 Years, a UN Agency for Women](#), Barbara Crossette, *The Nation*. For decades, advocates for women believed that a campaign for "gender mainstreaming" at the United Nations—that is, consciously factoring women into programs worldwide, promoting laws to support women at local and national levels and ensuring that women were well represented and heard in the UN itself—was all that was needed to bring the status of women, and women's rights, in from the margins of the international system. That was never enough.
- ◆ **July 2, 2010:** [Unanimous Vote Creates United Nations Entity for Women](#), Nina Lakhani and David Randall, *The Independent*. Some 65 years after it was founded, and after decades of reports on every species of sex discrimination and its wasteful effects, the United Nations has decided to set up a single, powerful body to promote equality for women around the world.



June 2010 GEAR representatives met with the President of the UN General Assembly.

GEAR Press Releases

- ◆ **September 14, 2010:** [SG Appoints Head of UN Women - Michelle Bachelet](#)
- ◆ **July 1 2010:** [UN Women Born: Civil Society Celebrates Creation of Gender Equality Entity After Four Years of Advocacy](#)
- ◆ **June 17, 2010:** [President of UN General Assembly receives global petition for urgent establishment of stronger UN women's agency](#)

GEAR History

- ◆ **2009:** [Women's Rights and Gender at the United Nations: The Case for a new Gender Equality Architecture](#)
- ◆ **2008:** A Stronger UN Entity for Women ([Arabic](#), [English](#), [French](#), [Spanish](#)) - GEAR Campaign Submission to the Commission on the Status of Women
- ◆ **2007:** [Women and Gender: The Evolution of Women Specific Institutions and Gender Integration at the United Nations](#)
- ◆ **2006:** [Global Statement on Reforming the Gender Equality Architecture of the United Nations](#)
- ◆ **2006:** Briefing Note on Women's Rights and the "Coherence Panel" in the UN Reform Process ([English](#), [French](#), [Spanish](#))

UN AGENCY INFORMATION

UN WOMEN

On July 2nd 2010, the UN adopted a Resolution creating UN Women, an entity that has combined the mandates, assets, liabilities, and functions of the four former UN gender agencies. The mandates and functions of the previously-existing four agencies will not be eliminated but will be under the mandate of the more powerful consolidated entity. With the appointment of an Under-Secretary-General (USG), UN Women will also have a seat at the highest decision-making levels. This provides the necessary high-level leadership and authority warranted by issues pertaining to gender and the advancement of women. The four former gender agencies had limited capacity, resources, visibility, and authority. Thus, Member States and civil society pushed for the creation of this unified entity to further the progress on gender equality and the advancement of women, increase resources to be used for these goals, and provide support to the UN, Member States, and civil society in implementing policies and commitments.

Why Reform was needed

UN Women will significantly boost UN efforts to promote gender equality, expand opportunity, and tackle discrimination around the globe. - UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon

The structure of UN Women will have both normative functions in policy-making and operational capacity on the ground. In addition to a USG, the administrative body will also consist of a 41-member Executive Board which will be elected at the end of October 2010 and will ideally be made up of representatives with a proven commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment. The Executive Board will be responsible for the major decisions regarding on the ground, operational issues of UN Women. The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) will continue its role as the normative, policy-making body for gender issues at the UN. At the regional and country levels, UN Women will ensure that timely technical and financial support is provided to Member States that request it. The entity will bring neglected gender issues to the forefront, providing the necessary resources to address them. Globally, UN Women will take the lead in guiding efforts to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women by supporting Member States in aligning gender with national priorities, building relationships with civil society, mobilizing political and financial support for international goals for women, and supporting the UN on gender equality issues. While UN Women currently continues a country presence in those countries where UNIFEM currently has offices, UN Women has a universal mandate, which means it will address women's needs in every country that requests assistance and support.

Structure

Funding

As is commonplace in UN agencies, about 90% of UN Women's budget will come from voluntary contributions while less than 10% will come from the UN's assessed budget. Member States recognize that UN Women will need a budget of at least 500 million USD to fulfill its mandate. The GEAR Campaign knows this amount must be doubled to 1 billion USD in order to expand the operational capacity of UN Women and realize its goals.

Civil Society

The role of civil society has been and will continue to be substantial in the operational success of UN Women; civil society must have a strong voice and role in setting the priorities, policies, and programmes of UN Women. To facilitate civil society participation throughout this transitional period, CSOs should plan meetings with NGO networks and UN country teams to strengthen and build mechanisms for civil society engagement with the new entity. [[Civil Society Participation Brief](#)]

The Under-Secretary-General

The First Under-Secretary-General of UN Women is Michelle Bachelet. As the former president of Chile, she has the potential to bring an innovative and ambitious agenda to the new UN entity. Her leadership will no doubt be informed by her experience in Chile as Minister of Health, Minister of National Defense, and as President in addition to her tenure as President of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR). Throughout her career, Bachelet has been an advocate for women and gender equality and as President, she achieved gender parity in cabinet appointments, increased the capacity of the National Women's Service, and fought for a comprehensive government position on HIV/AIDS prevention. She brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to her post as USG.

THE FORMER 4 AGENCIES

UNIFEM: The United Nations Development Fund for Women was established in 1976 with a mandate that would make it one of the visible UN gender entities as the one with the most on-the-ground presence and the ability to link governments and women's organizations.

OSAGI: The Office of Special Advisor on Gender Issues was founded in 1997. It was headed by a Special Adviser who provided recommendations on including gender issues in UN policies and mainstreaming gender into UN processes.

DAW: The Division for the Advancement of Women was established in 1946. Its mandate was to support formulation of policies to improve the status of women around the world and their equality with men as equal partners and beneficiaries of sustainable development, human rights, peace, and security.

INSTRAW: The International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women was established in 1976 to conduct research on the impact of globalization in the context of gender and develop frameworks and methodologies on measuring the progress of women.