



Security Council

Distr.: General
5 September 2025

Original: English

Women and peace and security

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. In 2000, Namibia presided over the Security Council as the Council adopted its first resolution on women and peace and security, which was a landmark moment viewed by many as the culmination of a century of transnational advocacy by the women's movement. That act also marked the beginning of a new chapter. Over the past 25 years, amid the erosion of democracies and ever-increasing global military expenditures, women peacebuilders and Member States have driven progress on the women and peace and security agenda by advancing change, shaping discourse and fostering peace where it was most needed.

2. This progress extends far beyond the adoption of Security Council resolutions and national action plans or the political declarations made in global capitals. It is reflected in women's increased access to rights in post-conflict communities, the gradual rise of women elected or appointed to positions of leadership, and the laws and policies they have championed. Change is also evident in the growing body of gender justice jurisprudence from national and international tribunals, the evolving composition of justice and security institutions, and the emergence of programmes that support millions of survivors of gender-based violence; services that simply did not exist before.

3. For example, gender-based crimes are now thoroughly investigated and documented by the United Nations or other international and national investigative mechanisms, putting on record the crimes that used to be shrouded in silence. More United Nations mediation efforts have been led by women. Consultations with women's civil society organizations and the deployment of gender expertise are increasingly routine. Women from Colombia, Liberia and the Philippines, among others, have provided real-life examples of the growing consensus that the participation of women makes peace agreements more likely to be reached and to be durable.¹ Women-led conflict prevention initiatives, from local mediator networks in Burundi to goodwill ambassadors in Somalia and situation rooms and peace huts in West Africa, built peace in their communities, preventing local conflicts that never made global headlines. In conflict-affected countries, maternal mortality rates and out-of-school rates for girls steadily declined from 1995 up until 2020. The

¹ Jana Krause, Werner Krause and Pila Bränfors, "Women's participation in peace negotiations and the durability of peace", *International Interactions*, vol. 44, No. 6 (2018).



percentage of women in parliaments and governments in conflict-affected countries inched up. Many of the 113 countries and territories that have adopted national action plans on women and peace and security as of July 2025, up from only 19 in 2010, have set targets for increased representation of women in the justice and security sectors or advanced legislation that promotes the empowerment and the rights of women and girls. Around the world, thousands of women have received reparations for having been subjected to sexual violence in conflict. Perpetrators of conflict-related sexual violence have been convicted in courts or sanctioned by the Security Council in growing numbers and, increasingly, have been sanctioned by regional organizations and individual Member States. Women's participation in United Nations peacekeeping has more than doubled since 2017.

4. In a context of rising authoritarianism, the proliferation of conflict and militarization, the past five years, from 2020 to 2025, have seen stagnation and even regression across many of the goals of the women and peace and security agenda. Political polarization continues to test the multilateral system and threatens to wipe out decades of gains. As compliance with international norms and treaties plummets, women, girls and marginalized groups suffer the most. Today, women's rights and gender equality are under threat, and even disputes over long-established gender-related terminology reflect not just semantic disagreements but a pushback that undermines legal protections, opening the door to broader rollbacks in the rights and daily lives of women and girls everywhere. In early 2025, Member States reported a backlash on women's rights in nearly a quarter of all countries seeking to implement the Beijing Platform for Action.² These factors have resulted in increased discrimination, weaker legal protections and reduced funding for supportive policies and programmes, including non-discriminatory sexual and reproductive healthcare. In 2024, 676 million women and girls lived within 50 kilometres of a deadly conflict event, the highest recorded number and share since the 1990s.³ The scale and speed of the suppression of the rights of women and girls in Afghanistan is appalling. The serious violations committed against women and girls in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Myanmar and the Sudan, and in the Occupied Palestinian Territory exemplify the grave risks facing women in crisis-affected settings. The present report sounds the alarm on these horrific levels of violence.

5. Still, at a moment when staff of the United Nations have been killed or held in detention in record numbers, and the Organization is dealing with a fiscal crisis that will force it to do less with less, it continues to stand firmly for women and girls. In Afghanistan, for example, in 2024, amid extraordinary and ever-tightening restrictions, the United Nations provided life-saving humanitarian aid to more than 9 million Afghan women and girls. Despite laws imposed by the Taliban *de facto* authorities restricting women's and girl's access to education, hundreds of thousands were nonetheless able to access learning opportunities through community-based learning and millions received mental health support and financial literacy through radio broadcasts created by women for women and supported by the United Nations. The United Nations managed to support tens of thousands of women-led businesses and thousands of women's organizations. Not a single restriction against women's rights imposed by the *de facto* authorities has been reversed, but the United Nations has stayed and delivered.

6. There are other examples of coalitions of stakeholders, including governments, civil society and the United Nations, succeeding in holding the line for women's rights. In the Syrian Arab Republic, before the developments of late 2024, a draft law

² See [E/CN.6/2025/3/Rev.1](#).

³ Siri Aas Rustad, "Women exposed to armed conflict, 1990–2024", Gender, Peace and Security Policy Brief (Peace Research Institute Oslo, 2025).

in the north-west of the country that would have restricted women's rights was withdrawn after concerted advocacy. Efforts to repeal a prohibition on female genital mutilation in the Gambia were successfully challenged. Countries such as Colombia and Sierra Leone adopted laws to end child marriage and advance gender equality. Several Member States and United Nations system entities have taken stronger action to protect women human rights defenders at risk and channel funds to women's organizations in conflict-affected countries. In intergovernmental spaces, too, advocacy for the women and peace and security agenda has held fast. In the Pact for the Future, Member States reiterated long-standing commitments on women and peace and security. In its general recommendation No. 40 (2024) on the equal and inclusive representation of women in decision-making systems, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women clarified that achieving substantive equality means parity in all decision-making roles across all aspects, stages and levels of decision-making on peace and security, including in confidential meetings and back-channel diplomacy.

7. Yet, 25 years into our collective work on the issue of women and peace and security, the halls of government, peace tables and security institutions remain overwhelmingly dominated by men, too often with limited accountability for the outcomes of these decisions. Women peacebuilders know that the world finds itself amid record levels of conflict and violence partly because the international system has not invested enough to deliver on the promise of Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#).

8. The present report was prepared pursuant to the presidential statement dated 26 October 2010 ([S/PRST/2010/22](#)), in which the Security Council requested annual reports on the implementation of resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#); resolution [2122 \(2013\)](#), in which the Council called for updates on progress, challenges and gaps across all areas of the women and peace and security agenda; and resolution [2493 \(2019\)](#), in which the Council called for reinforced measures to implement the agenda in full. In addition to a progress update across the women and peace and security agenda, the report places special emphasis on the goal of sparking a gender data revolution on women and peace and security ([S/2020/946](#), para. 113 (e)), identifying data gaps and exploring how greater access and use of gender data will be essential to break patterns of stagnation and regression and uphold the promise of the women and peace and security agenda. The report also sets out recommendations for commitments by Member States that should lead to more meaningful improvements in the lives of women and girls and, by so doing, help bring the world back to a path of cooperation and peace.

II. Goals for the decade on women and peace and security: gender data and analysis to prevent and respond to conflict and crisis

9. Timely gender data of good quality serve as a powerful and necessary tool for informed policymaking, advocacy and programming, as well as for monitoring progress, variables and trends. The need for gender data has not featured significantly in discussions relating to the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda. The scarcity of both quantitative and qualitative gender data and analysis renders the lived experiences and needs of women and girls invisible, especially in conflict and crisis settings. The absence of a gender perspective perpetuates bias and discrimination in decisions, policies and institutions, as demonstrated in a number of tangible ways, including: ill-fitting uniforms and protective gear for women; the lack of safe facilities in displacement camps; the placement of water points that heightens risks for women and girls; insufficient consideration given to care responsibilities; and the limited consideration of the gender-specific impact of weapons and new

technology. In addition, many actors, including Member States with dedicated national action plans, struggle to track progress against their women and peace and security commitments and to monitor budgets and expenditures. Gender data gaps and the overall lack of data disaggregated by different variables also affect the monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals and other global commitments. Some progress has been made, however: gender data are now available for 63 per cent of the indicators of the global indicator framework for the Sustainable Development Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, compared with 26 per cent in 2015, when the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development began.⁴

10. More actors are undertaking gender analyses in conflict and crisis settings in order to inform policymaking and programming, including with respect to peacebuilding initiatives, transitions and humanitarian action. In 2024, nearly all United Nations entities surveyed had conducted some form of gender analysis to inform their programming. Gender alerts and assessments from settings such as Afghanistan, Haiti, Lebanon, Myanmar, the Sudan, Ukraine and the Occupied Palestinian Territory have provided real-time snapshots of women's needs and priorities, which in turn informed country strategies and humanitarian interventions, unlocked financing and fed into intergovernmental dialogues and debates. As the situation for women and girls in Afghanistan continued to deteriorate, the quarterly consultations conducted jointly by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the International Organization for Migration and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan provided a channel for women from different provinces to voice their perspectives and exercise leadership and agency. Participatory assessments have also been used by entities such as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in different settings so as to engage forcibly displaced and stateless people of all genders and ages and from diverse backgrounds in analysis and in shaping data-informed recommendations that more meaningfully reflect the needs and priorities of women and girls on the move.

11. Since 2015, new initiatives have expanded access to data and trend analysis on peace and security. The Women, Peace and Security Index⁵ tracks sustainable peace across countries through the lens of inclusion, justice and security for women. Various conflict trackers and watchlists have also emerged, but most still lack sufficient gender analysis. The UN-Women data hub, powered by the Women Count programme, houses gender data, monitors gender equality across the Goals and transforms data into compelling stories and resources.⁶ In its next phase, the programme is deepening its engagement in humanitarian and crisis contexts, prioritizing the women and peace and security agenda and scaling up efforts to harness citizen-generated data, big data gathered by leveraging new technologies and other innovative sources, recognizing that much of the data relating to crises come from non-traditional sources.

12. Various other data initiatives have expanded our knowledge in the area of women and peace and security. For instance, the integrated cross-cutting context analysis and risk assessment tool developed by the World Food Programme has helped to identify gender-specific protection risks in several conflict- and crisis-affected countries. The monitoring and evaluation indicator bank used by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee with respect to its mental health and psychosocial support minimum service package encourages the collection of data and its disaggregation by

⁴ United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), *Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals: The Gender Snapshot 2025*.

⁵ See <https://giwps.georgetown.edu/the-index/>.

⁶ See <https://data.unwomen.org/>.

gender, age and disability in order to inform the provision of mental health services in emergencies and equity-focused programming. The Observatory of Killed Journalists led by the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) provides disaggregated data on the killing of journalists worldwide. Canada, as part of the Elsie Initiative for Women in Peace Operations, has funded research to identify the challenges and opportunities for women in uniformed roles. The Essential Gender Data Toolkit for Humanitarian Action provides an accessible compendium of resources for producing and using gender data in humanitarian settings. The Inter-Agency Working Group on interoperability of baseline population, displacement and refugee data has significantly improved the interoperability and disaggregation of crisis-related mobility data. Through its coordination role in the monitoring of women and peace and security indicators tracked by the United Nations system, UN-Women has helped to provide a big picture of overall trends.

13. Reduced funding is constraining investment in data production and innovation. Reports show that bilateral donor support for all data and statistics totalled approximately \$800 million, of which \$122 million (15 per cent) were allocated to gender data.⁷ Multi-partner funding initiatives such as the Complex Risk Analytics Fund⁸ have emerged as a vital mechanism for supporting gender data in crisis settings. In line with the Data Strategy of the Secretary-General for Action by Everyone, Everywhere, the Fund has promoted innovation and enabled the generation of new data sets, including through the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project. In 2024, the Fund launched its first open call for gender data, offering \$3 million in funding. Over 230 applications were received, which demonstrates the strong demand and the urgent need for continued investment in this area.

14. Despite such progress in gender data availability at the global level, insecurity and access constraints, weakened institutions and damaged infrastructure, limited resources and population displacement all hinder data collection.⁹ Several countries affected by protracted conflicts suffer from outdated national statistics, such as with respect to population data.

15. One of the most critical gaps concerns the lack of data on conflict-related sexual violence, which is made worse by the limited and declining access to survivor-centred services. Reduced specialized technical capacity and resources pose challenges for existing monitoring systems and mechanisms that were established to document conflict-related sexual violence as a violation of international law, in turn preventing both the provision of life-saving and essential services and access to justice. In his recent report on conflict-related sexual violence (S/2025/389), the Secretary-General highlights the role of women's protection advisers in implementing the monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements in conflict-affected settings. These and other initiatives, such as the partnership between UN-Women, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and Justice Rapid Response to deploy experts to document crimes of gender-based violence, including sexual violence, as part of investigations, have brought these crimes out of the shadows. The information gathered is not only critical in contributing to accountability, but also in informing prevention efforts and evidence-based service delivery, including non-discriminatory sexual and reproductive healthcare. In 2024, however, entities that monitor sexual violence and other violations were denied access in some settings or

⁷ The most recent data on this matter are from 2021, available at: <https://data2x.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Development-Assistance-Research-Brief-Final.pdf>.

⁸ See <https://crafd.io/>.

⁹ Many specific gaps were also reported, including regarding data on: access to emergency reproductive health services, the socioeconomic consequences of crises on women and marginalized groups, disabilities in conflict and crisis, the intersections of climate, conflict and gender, access to and control over resources, mobility and women on the move.

unable to investigate due to ongoing fighting. Funding cuts pose another risk to these already underfunded mechanisms, which are financed mainly through extrabudgetary funds. In settings where transitions and drawdowns of peace operations are taking place, efforts to ensure the continuation of monitoring and reporting arrangements and engagement with parties to conflict are especially important. In any data collection on gender-based violence, including sexual violence, it is crucial to prioritize ethical considerations and survivor safety. That requirement highlights the value of humanitarian administrative data systems, such as the Gender-based Violence Information Management System, and the important linkage between the availability of services and the ability to monitor trends, as monitoring of such violence without the necessary services being in place does not meet ethical and safety standards.

16. The monitoring of other human rights violations, including technology-facilitated threats and attacks on women human rights defenders, peacebuilders and women in politics, is also essential. Civic space is increasingly restricted through censorship, surveillance and online harassment, particularly aimed at women, meaning that digital platforms are often the last remaining avenues for voice and activism, despite the inherent risks. Purposeful gender-responsive use of technology, online platforms and artificial intelligence could help to counter information distortion, online abuse and harassment, but such an approach will require more efforts to support women in emerging fields such as artificial intelligence and machine learning, as well as targeted efforts to link technology and the women and peace and security agenda. Cross-regional cooperation, regulation and transparency are urgently needed in order to ensure that technological innovation is grounded in human rights, protects civic space and is designed to advance gender equality, rather than undermine it. Gender equality is a core principle of the UNESCO Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence, the first-ever global standard on this matter.

17. More work is needed to deepen data analysis on women's participation in conflict prevention and resolution, as well as in humanitarian, peacebuilding and reconstruction efforts. Greater efforts are also needed to disaggregate peace and security data by age and to reflect the leadership of young women peacebuilders. To date, the lack of systematic and quantifiable information has obscured women's contributions and limited accountability for the implementation of commitments to equal participation. Efforts to collect quantitative data must go hand in hand with efforts to expand qualitative data on influence, access and impact. Such efforts include addressing informal and community-level peace efforts led by women, which remain underdocumented.

18. Partnerships with women-led, local organizations on the collection, analysis and use of data are central for addressing gender data gaps, increasing the degree to which women are represented in data and contextually relevant analysis. Several United Nations entities have incorporated citizen-generated and participatory approaches to capture the voices and experiences of affected populations in conflict settings. At the same time, the burden of data collection and reporting on human rights violations and abuses and needs assessments cannot fall solely on civilians during a conflict. The international community must support the deployment of rapid response teams to collect gender data and explore the use of innovative solutions, such as satellite imagery and other emerging tools, as part of helping to fill information gaps when traditional data collection is not feasible for security and safety reasons. Rebuilding the capacity of local statistical systems in post-conflict settings where data infrastructure has been destroyed must also be prioritized as an integral part of reconstruction.

19. While gender data in conflict and crisis are sparse and data collection remains an area of significant underinvestment, existing data and analysis, including as

documented in the present report, show deeply concerning trends. The figures on rising conflict-related sexual violence, targeted threats and attacks against women in politics and human rights defenders, violations of women's human rights, including sexual and reproductive health and rights, continued obstacles to participation in peace processes and funding cuts to women's organization on the frontlines of conflict and crisis must not be ignored. Silence and inaction will allow these patterns to continue, peace will become even more difficult to achieve and development goals and commitments will ring empty. Those data and evidence need to be used by policymakers, leaders, activists and the media to effect change.

III. Update on progress, gaps and challenges across other areas of the women and peace and security agenda

A. Women's meaningful participation in negotiating peace

20. The normative foundation for women's participation in peace processes is the strongest it has ever been. The commitment to advance women's full, equal, meaningful and safe participation is now firmly integrated into multiple Security Council resolutions and reinforced in the outcomes adopted by other intergovernmental bodies, including in the Pact for the Future. That commitment is echoed in regional policies and national action plans on women and peace and security. Of the 113 existing national action plans, 55 per cent include explicit commitments on women's participation in peace processes and 42 per cent set out a dedicated commitment to support women mediators.

21. In parallel with policy commitments, research and practice have distilled various strategies and approaches that can be applied to promote women's participation and inclusive peace processes. For instance, in Colombia and South Sudan, multi-track processes have been pursued to advance direct participation and engage civil society. In Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic, independent delegations and advisory bodies have been central in advocating women's direct and indirect participation. In Afghanistan and Yemen, innovating through digital dialogues and consultations has helped to ensure that women's perspectives and priorities are heard. The rapid response window on women's participation in peace processes and peace agreements of the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund has illustrated the importance role of targeted funding mechanisms.

22. The Common Pledge for Women's Full, Equal and Meaningful Participation in Peace Processes¹⁰ was launched at the open debate of the Security Council on women and peace and security, in October 2024. As of September 2025, 37 adopters, including Member States, international and regional organizations and other mediating actors, have signed the Pledge, committing to concrete steps to advance women's participation in all peace processes in which they are involved. Institutionalizing these commitments will be essential. The commitment by the African Union to develop a continental policy framework that requires the representation of women in African Union-led mediation and peacebuilding efforts and the embedding of the Network of African Women in Conflict Prevention and Mediation (FemWise-Africa) within its Peace and Security Architecture illustrate how institutional efforts can be shifted towards equality. The Pasay Declaration, adopted in 2024,¹¹ which sets out measurable targets for women's participation in peace negotiations, is another example of multilateral efforts in this area.

¹⁰ See <https://peacemaker.un.org/en/thematic-areas/gender-women-peace-security/common-pledge>.

¹¹ See <https://icwpsmanila2024.com/pasay-declaration/>.

23. This renewed focus and targeted action by leading mediation actors is sorely needed. The number of violent conflicts is rising and fewer conflicts are being resolved through peaceful means as outlined in the Charter of the United Nations. In 2024, the Uppsala Conflict Data Program recorded 61 active conflicts involving at least one State, the highest number since statistics began in 1946.¹² Major conflicts are increasingly negotiated in closed and exclusive formats, with only partial agreements reached, which are often focused on ceasefires, humanitarian access or the structure of future peace talks. Challenges in implementing and sustaining ceasefire agreements, in the absence of wider political processes that are based on international law and universal norms, are contributing to continued conflict and humanitarian crises. Moreover, as gender perspectives are more commonly found in comprehensive peace agreements, which are only reached much later in the process, the above-mentioned trends have implications on the likelihood of women's priorities and rights being meaningfully addressed. As the space for inclusive and comprehensive peace and political processes shrinks, there are fewer opportunities and entry points for women to gain access to, and make an impact at, the official level of talks. For instance, despite sustained United Nations advocacy, Afghan civil society and, more broadly, women, were absent from the meeting of special envoys with the de facto authorities held on 30 June and 1 July 2024, in Doha.¹³ Similarly, in Libya and Yemen, women were entirely excluded from official ceasefire negotiation delegations, despite efforts by the United Nations and other stakeholders aimed at their inclusion.

24. In 2024, UN-Women initiated the Women in Peace Processes Monitor to collect both quantitative and qualitative data on women's peace efforts and inclusion in peace processes and fill a major global data gap. Initial available data collected for the period from 2020 to 2024¹⁴ indicate that women's representation as negotiators, mediators and signatories in major peace processes remains far below the minimum one third target set by the United Nations¹⁵ and the parity goal for decision-making recommended by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women¹⁶ (see figure I). While there is great variation across processes, women participate more often as mediators than as negotiators, but figures remain low overall and similar to earlier data sets (1992–2019).¹⁷ In 2024, women made up only 7 per cent of negotiators on average worldwide, and nearly 9 out of 10 negotiation tracks included no women negotiators at all.¹⁸ In mediation roles, women were slightly better represented, averaging 14 per cent, but two thirds of mediation efforts did not include any woman mediator. Although women's representation among signatories to peace agreements was comparatively higher in 2024, standing at 20 per cent of signatories, the five-year average remained low, at 11 per cent.

¹² See <https://www.uu.se/en/news/2025/2025-06-11-ucdp-sharp-increase-in-conflicts-and-wars>.

¹³ See <https://www.womenpeacesecurity.org/resource/letter-womens-rights-afghanistan-06-2024/>.

¹⁴ Numbers provided herein are from initial Women in Peace Processes Monitor data. Data will be continuously updated.

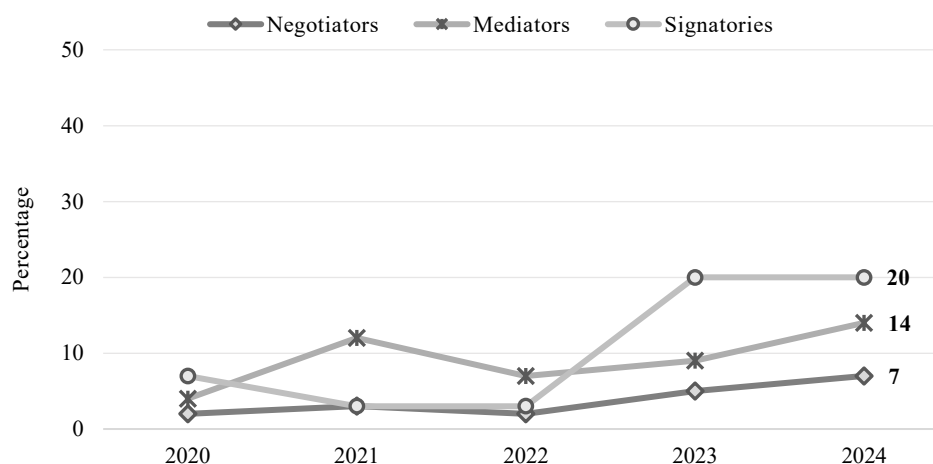
¹⁵ In 2023, the Secretary-General committed the United Nations to advocate a minimum of one third women (or no more than two thirds of any one sex) in mediation and peace processes, while continuing to aim for an increase towards 50/50 gender balance in political and electoral processes.

¹⁶ General recommendation No. 40 (2024) on the equal and inclusive representation of women in decision-making systems.

¹⁷ See <https://www.cfr.org/womens-participation-in-peace-processes/>.

¹⁸ Based on 65 active peace processes in 2024.

Figure I
Women's participation in major peace processes globally, 2020–2024



Source: UN-Women, initial data from the Women in Peace Processes Monitor. Data will be continuously updated.

Note: The percentages were calculated as the average of the percentage of women negotiators/mediators/signatories per process.

25. These averages are significantly influenced by a small number of peace processes, in particular the peace processes in Colombia and the Philippines, which featured the highest levels of women's representation. These processes notably raise the global averages while obscuring the widespread exclusion observed in other contexts. More actors involved in mediation should institutionalize data collection and reporting so that these data are more widely available and can prompt change in real time.

26. As the global peace and security context has become more challenging, and as a diverse set of regional, national and local actors now engage in peacemaking efforts, collective action to address barriers and challenges to women's participation is even more important – as recognized by the Secretary-General in the Common Pledge. In 2024, the United Nations led or co-led four active peace processes: the Geneva International Discussions, two processes relating to Libya and one process in the Sudan. Two women served as lead mediators in three of these processes. Since 2012, all United Nations mediation teams have included women, with their share rising from 40 per cent in 2023 to 45 per cent in 2024, and women civil society organizations are consistently consulted. In 2024, the United Nations also provided support to two peace processes in Colombia¹⁹ and to the constitution-making processes in South Sudan and Somalia, as well as continuing to provide support to the women's advisory boards in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic. Despite continuous advocacy with negotiating parties, increasing women's direct participation in delegations remains a challenging task. In 2024, women represented, on average, only 18 per cent of negotiators or delegates across negotiators in peace and constitution-making processes led, co-led or supported by the United Nations, a drop from 19 per cent in 2023, and 23 per cent in 2020.

27. There is, at present, greater recognition of women's advocacy and peace efforts at the community level. In Ethiopia, Kenya and Liberia, women peacebuilders

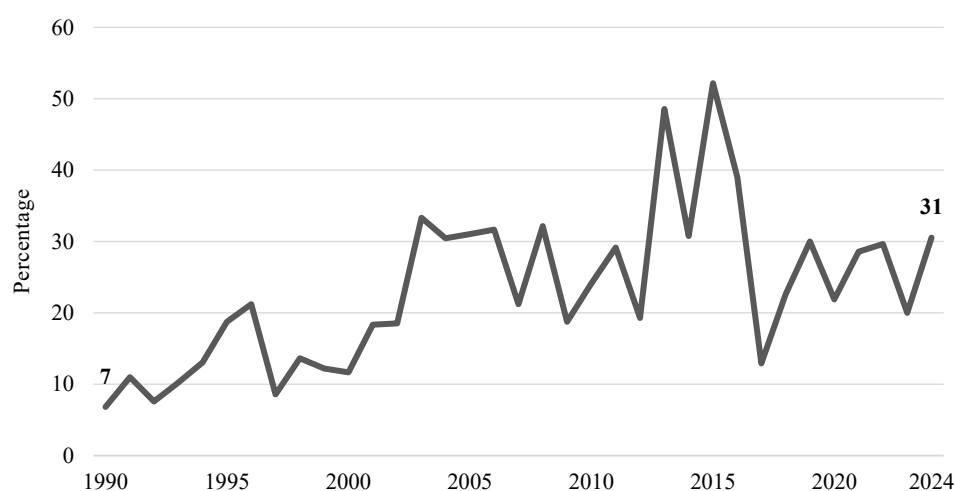
¹⁹ United Nations support is focused primarily on the ongoing implementation of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace, signed in 2016 between the Government and the former Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo (FARC-EP), and also included support to peace dialogues with Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN) and Estado Mayor de los Bloques y Frentes (EMBF).

influenced peace processes and agreements at the local, regional and national levels.²⁰ In the Great Lakes region, the United Nations, the African Union and women's organizations succeeded in advocating the inclusion of two women mediators in the joint East African Community-South African Development Community peace initiative. In the Sudan, UN-Women supported the formation of a coalition of women peacebuilders and their efforts to shape a peace agenda, contributing to their indirect participation at the peace talks held in Geneva in August 2024. Across regions, networks of women mediator have continued to expand in numbers and reach, including in contexts with limited access for women to formal processes. In Côte d'Ivoire, through local platforms, women mediators deescalated intercommunal conflict in the Cavally Region, leading to the signing of a local peace agreement and, for the first time, the designation of women as guarantors of its follow-up. In 2024, UN-Women and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) supported 32 peacebuilding processes that included young women.

28. Of 36 peace agreements reached in 2024 around the world, 11 (31 per cent) included at least one provision with reference to women, girls, gender or sexual violence (see figure II). Although this was an increase from 2023, the agreements with gender provisions were limited to only four processes in three countries: Colombia, South Sudan and the Sudan. The recent peace processes between the Government of Colombia and armed groups represented most of the gender references in 2023 and 2024, which was in large part attributable to the presence of women and their contributions to the agenda-setting of the peace process from the outset. While some agreements referred to women's participation, only the agreement reached in South Sudan²¹ contained a gender quota. Only 2 of the 11 agreements, in Colombia and the Sudan, included references to gender-based violence, and one in Colombia referred to the role of women in the implementation of the agreement.

Figure II

Percentage of peace agreements with provisions referring to women, girls and gender, 1990–2024



Source: PA-X Peace Agreement Database, version 9. Peace and Conflict Resolution Evidence Platform, University of Edinburgh (accessed June 2025).

Note: Data analysed include inter-State and intra-State peace agreements, except for local peace agreements.

²⁰ See <https://www.c-r.org/learning-hub/enabling-change-lessons-grant-making-increase-womens-participation-peace-processes>.

²¹ See <https://www.peaceagreements.org/agreements/wgg/2614/>.

29. In 2024, no peace agreements were signed in processes led or co-led by the United Nations. Nevertheless, the Organization continued to support the implementation of the gender provisions of existing peace agreements, such as in the Central African Republic, Colombia, the Philippines and South Sudan. United Nations teams also provided technical support and advice on gender-sensitive approaches to ceasefire negotiations and implementation in contexts such as Ethiopia and the Sudan.

30. The knowledge and tools exist and the frameworks are in place to drive forward women's participation in peacemaking, and women across conflict-affected contexts continue to offer concrete recommendations and visions for peace. To make the participation of women a tangible reality, these proposals must be taken on board by all actors who have leverage in peace efforts. The evidence shows the need for stronger accountability and refocused investment in inclusive peace processes that go beyond managing conflict to addressing its root causes, advancing gender equality and justice and reducing the risk of conflict relapse.

B. Promoting gender equality and women and peace and security in United Nations peacekeeping through the Action for Peacekeeping initiative

31. In United Nations peacekeeping operations, the prioritization of the women and peace and security agenda, including the percentage of women among uniformed personnel and in leadership positions, has notably increased over the past decade. That progress has been welcomed by many Member States, from donors to troop- and police-contributing countries, an overwhelming majority of which express their support and interest in improving the gender balance of peacekeeping missions and making sure that they deliver dividends for women and girls. This support is evident in every Security Council meeting on peacekeeping and in other intergovernmental spaces, including in recent United Nations Peacekeeping Ministerial meetings, at which Member States continued to pledge their support and renewed commitment to advance the women and peace and security agenda.

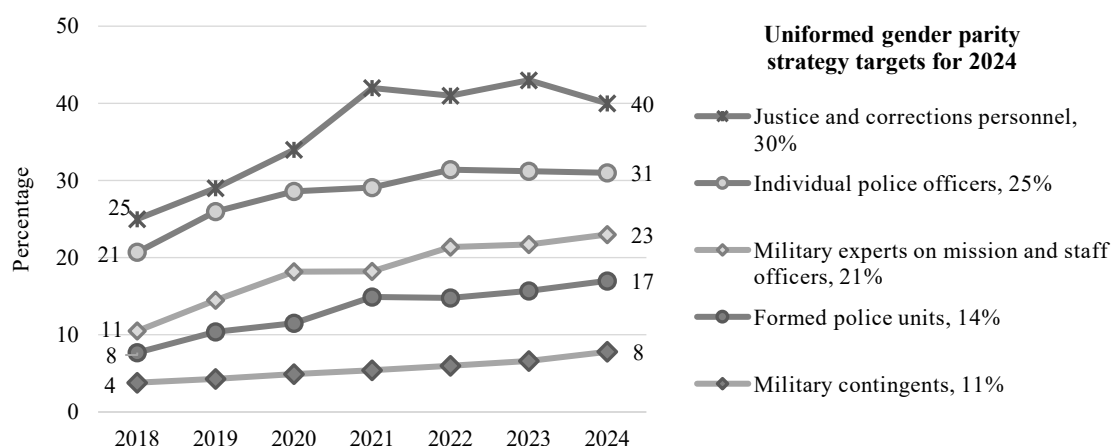
32. Over the past year, peacekeeping operations have continued to make good on this commitment. In Abyei, women's participation in the biannual migration conference between the Misseriya and Ngok Dinka communities increased from 19 per cent in 2023 to 41 per cent in 2025, with support from the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei. The United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic has supported the establishment of peace circles made up of women who work to mediate local conflicts across 16 regions. The United Nations Mission in South Sudan collaborated with UN-Women to facilitate the participation of five women in the Tumaini Initiative in Nairobi, in order to mediate with the holdout groups that did not sign the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan in 2018. The United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon has established formal channels in its areas of deployment to consult with women on threats and risks and build networks for aid distribution. The United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) has mobilized young women influencers to dispel misinformation and supported successful intercommunal mediation led by women, such as between Hema and Lendu communities, near Bunia, that had not interacted for years owing to mistrust, misinformation and past grievances. In addition, MONUSCO Prosecution Support Cells continue to provide technical and logistical support to the military judicial authorities in the organization of investigative missions and mobile court hearings. Two thirds of these cases were about conflict-related sexual violence, leading to the convictions of several members of the armed forces and the police, as well as non-State armed groups.

33. In the current context, however, United Nations peacekeeping faces formidable challenges, as does the multilateral system at large. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a large-scale offensive by armed groups and an onslaught of crimes against women and girls has overwhelmed the capacity of the Mission to monitor violations and protect civilians. During the escalation of hostilities in Lebanon in 2024, women and girls struggled to have access to physical protection and to find safe accommodation in overcrowded shelters. In Abyei, despite the mission's efforts, women remain underrepresented in local security mechanisms (between 7 and 16 per cent in the different protection committees), and are almost completely absent from traditional courts.

34. In 2018, the United Nations launched the uniformed gender parity strategy. Since then, the percentage of women has more than doubled across most categories and both inclusive environments and meaningful participation of women have been strengthened. For military contingents, progress has been slower but steady (see figure III). When accounting for all uniformed personnel across peacekeeping operations and special political missions, the share of women is just above 10 per cent, compared with just over 3 per cent 15 years ago. In the police components of missions, 4 of 8 senior leadership positions are held by women, but there is currently only one woman heading a military component. Inclusive and balanced teams have helped to increase operational effectiveness, for example through improved community engagement, early warning and intelligence-gathering and host country security sector reform.

Figure III

Proportion of women in military and police personnel by types of positions, and justice and corrections government-provided personnel in United Nations peace operations, 2018–2024



Source: Department of Peace Operations (data accessed April 2025).

Note: Data reflect annual averages.

35. Efforts to better respond to the needs of women and men who serve as peacekeepers have led to improved provision of healthcare for women, strengthened peer support through the network for uniformed women peacekeepers, to be rolled out to all peacekeeping mission in 2025, and better peacekeeping facilities. As of 2024, 44 per cent of facilities are fully compliant with the gender-responsive camp design endorsed by the Department of Operational Support, and the remaining 55 per cent are undergoing improvements. Challenges remain in the civilian component of missions. While the percentage of international staff that are women is above 30 per cent on average, with modest increases in recent years, the percentages among national staff across missions are well below that.

36. The shrinking presence of United Nations peacekeeping has led to a security vacuum and the escalation of violence, leaving women and girls more vulnerable to the predations of armed groups. The departure or scaling down of peacekeeping missions has also weakened the ability to monitor violations of women's rights, deploy mobile courts to remote areas and sustain support to women-led networks that have proven effective in reducing community violence.

C. Protecting and promoting the human rights and leadership of women and girls in conflict settings and humanitarian emergencies

37. The proliferation and escalation of conflicts in recent years have been accompanied by a shocking disregard for international humanitarian law and increasing levels of brutality and cruelty. Much of it is inflicted on women, girls and minorities. Documented incidents of sexual violence against girls increased by 35 per cent in 2024 compared with the previous year. In some places, girls account for nearly half of the victims of sexual violence. An alarming 38,000 cases of sexual violence were reported by service providers in North Kivu alone in just the first months of 2025. In Haiti, after years of widespread violence perpetrated by gangs, reports of gender-based violence increased dramatically in 2024, and 64 per cent of the reported cases were incidents of sexual violence. In the Sudan, the United Nations reported a 288 per cent increase in demand for life-saving support for survivors of rape and sexual violence from 2023 to 2024, and more than 12 million women and girls are at risk. The number of conflict-related sexual violence violations documented by the United Nations has increased by 87 per cent in two years.²² The level of gender-based violence was recorded as severe or extreme in 22 of 25 country operations in the annual report of the Global Protection Cluster.²³

38. Sexual violence is only one of the ways in which women and girls suffer the consequences of wars. According to OHCHR, between 2023 and 2024, the number of women and children killed in armed conflicts quadrupled compared with the previous two-year period, and 7 out of every 10 women killed in conflicts worldwide died in Gaza.²⁴ In Ukraine, women and girls account for 31 per cent of civilian casualties.²⁵ According to the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners, nearly 30 per cent of civilians killed in Myanmar by the military in 2024 were women. In the Sudan, Médecins sans frontières reported that women accounted for 25 per cent of the war-wounded assisted in their facilities in early 2024. As bombs repeatedly and deliberately hit public markets, maternity hospitals, residential homes and schools, the percentage of women and girls affected by explosive violence increases.

39. Women in public roles, from politicians, community leaders and human rights defenders to journalists and artists, are also targeted by armed actors. In 2024, women journalists were killed in such places as Iraq, Somalia, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Ukraine and the Occupied Palestinian Territory.²⁶ The spread of disinformation, misinformation and deepfakes contributes to silencing women and eroding the freedom of the press. The overwhelming majority of women journalists face regular online harassment, serious threats and smear campaigns.

²² See S/2025/389. See also S/PV.9378 and S/PV.9981.

²³ See gbvaor.net/sites/default/files/2025-02/gpc_annual_report_2024_final.pdf.

²⁴ See www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/06/un-data-shows-surge-civilian-deaths-conflict-globally-highlights-pervasive; see also storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/b12adfl3a840b7a23d089050c3bd80.

²⁵ See www.ohchr.org/en/documents/country-reports/40th-periodic-report-human-rights-situation-ukraine-treatment-prisoners.

²⁶ See www.unesco.org/en/safety-journalists/observatory?hub=72609.

40. The backlash against gender equality has been compounded by the rise of violent extremist groups, shrinking civic space and unconstitutional changes of government, all of which have made the work of women human rights defenders and peacebuilders much more dangerous. In response, several Member States and the United Nations have stepped up their interventions to prevent and respond to cases of intimidation and reprisals, including by advocating publicly and bilaterally with governments and parties to conflict on specific cases and increasing their support to specialized funds for this purpose. Since 2022, the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund has supported 777 women human rights defenders and thousands of their dependants across 25 crisis-affected countries.

41. Women and girls are also affected by high levels of reproductive violence, including forced sterilizations, forced pregnancy and deliberate destruction or blocking of sexual and reproductive healthcare, despite clear prohibitions in international criminal law, international human rights law and international humanitarian law, including in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and the Geneva Conventions.²⁷ The destruction of maternal healthcare and sexual and reproductive health facilities in conflict zones is a form of reproductive violence and can be a tactic of genocide, as they jeopardize women and children's lives and can be "intended to prevent births within the group".²⁸ In 2023, 58 per cent of all maternal deaths, 50 per cent of all newborn deaths and 51 per cent of all stillbirths occurred in the 29 countries with a United Nations humanitarian response plan.²⁹ Given the frequency of reported incidents of bombed maternity wards, blocked reproductive healthcare, rising sexual violence and steep funding cuts that have forced the closure of the services most needed by women, these numbers are expected to significantly worsen, reversing gains in maternal mortality rates. In Gaza, tens of thousands of deliveries have taken place amid rubble and bombings, most of them without access to anaesthetics for caesarean sections, postpartum care or even water.³⁰ Nearly 272,000 pregnant women in the Sudan are displaced.³¹ In South Darfur, pregnant women and women giving birth are dying in high numbers from complications that would be preventable with basic obstetric care.³² In Myanmar, 223,000 women face high-risk pregnancies due to the lack of maternal healthcare services following the earthquake in March 2025.³³ In Afghanistan, where one third of women give birth without professional medical support and where preventable maternal complications claim the life of a woman every two hours, the decision to ban women from medical training will prevent more than 36,000 midwives and 2,800 nurses from entering the workforce in the next few years.³⁴ The estimate that maternal mortality will rise by 50 per cent in Afghanistan by 2026³⁵ predates that decision, and the estimate increase is therefore expected to be even more severe. Given the increasing use of sexual

²⁷ See www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2024/09/research-paper-documenting-reproductive-violence-unveiling-opportunities-challenges-and-legal-pathways-for-un-investigative-mechanisms.

²⁸ Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, art. 2.

²⁹ See <https://www.alignmnh.org/2023/01/10/humanitarian-response-plans-and-the-global-maternal-and-newborn-health-agenda/>.

³⁰ See A/HRC/58/CRP.6. See also www.unfpa.org/resources/palestine-situation-report-15-february-2025.

³¹ See <https://arabstates.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/2025-02/UNFPA%20Sudan%20Annual%20Report%202024.pdf>.

³² See <https://www.doctorswithoutborders.ca/msf-report-pregnant-women-and-children-dying-in-shocking-numbers-in-south-darfur/>.

³³ See asiapacific.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2025-04/mn-20250388119-myanmar-earthquake-genders-snapshot-01.pdf.

³⁴ See press.un.org/en/2024/sc15932.doc.htm.

³⁵ See www.unwomen.org/en/news-stories/press-release/2025/08/afghanistan-ten-facts-about-the-worlds-most-severe-womens-rights-crisis.

violence by parties to conflict, Member States should ensure that all women and girls have access to the whole array of relevant sexual and reproductive services in accordance with international standards.

42. The threats to sexual and reproductive health are compounded by trauma. Mental health receives less than 2 per cent of global health financing, even though issues relating to mental health account for 20 per cent of health issues reported in emergencies. In Gaza and in Afghanistan, most women and girls suffer from stress, anxiety and/or depression.³⁶ These situations may result in trauma and long-lasting impacts on their well-being, and in some cases, in suicide. In Ukraine, as domestic violence has risen by 36 per cent since 2022, 42 per cent of women are now at risk of depression and 53 per cent of women who are internally displaced already suffer from depression.³⁷ In Kosovo,³⁸ 86 per cent of survivors of sexual violence continue to suffer post-traumatic stress 25 years after the end of the conflict.³⁹

43. Women and girls are also affected by displacement, food insecurity, loss of education and harmful practices such as female genital mutilation and child marriage. At the end of 2024, an estimated 123.2 million people were forcibly displaced,⁴⁰ representing a decade of year-on-year increases in the number of refugees and others forced to flee their homes. Over 60 million forcibly displaced and stateless women and girls face elevated risks of gender-based violence. Over 85 million children affected by crises are out of school, of whom 51.9 per cent are girls,⁴¹ including 5 million girls in the Sudan.⁴² Four years after the Taliban takeover, 8 out of 10 young Afghan women are excluded from education, jobs or training.⁴³ More than 280 million people are experiencing acute food insecurity, and in some contexts, such as in Gaza and the Sudan, tens of thousands are at risk of dying of starvation. As of 15 August 2025, the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification confirmed that famine (IPC phase 5) was affecting over half a million people in Gaza, with another 1.07 million people in the emergency category (IPC phase 4).⁴⁴

44. Notwithstanding massive challenges to meet ever-rising needs, humanitarian actors today reach many more women and girls, use more sex-disaggregated data and gender analysis, and include more women's organizations in humanitarian country teams compared with only a decade ago. In 2024, 91 per cent of humanitarian response plans integrated gender analysis. United Nations agencies now reach millions of survivors with services to prevent and respond to gender-based violence, even as this sector remains underfunded. In humanitarian settings in 2024, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) reached an estimated 58.4 million children, adolescents and caregivers with multisectoral and psychosocial support services, across 76 humanitarian contexts, and provided services to address gender-based violence for 17.7 million children and women in emergency settings. In 2024, 35 per cent of the humanitarian funding of UNFPA was directed to local and women-led organizations, a share that UNFPA aims to increase to 43 per cent in 2025. A review of 42 cash plus programmes in 17 fragile and conflict-affected countries found that

³⁶ See www.unwomen.org/en/articles/explainer/inside-the-crisis-you-dont-see-how-war-impacts-womens-mental-health.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

³⁹ See S/2025/389.

⁴⁰ See www.unhcr.org/global-trends-report-2024.

⁴¹ Education Cannot Wait, "State of education for crisis-affected children and adolescents: access and learning outcomes – global estimates 2025 update" (2025).

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ UN-Women, 2024 Afghanistan Gender Index.

⁴⁴ See www.ipcinfo.org/ipcinfo-website/countries-in-focus-archive/issue-134/en/.

over half were specifically aimed at reaching women and that they were more likely to do so in high-intensity conflict settings. Even in such sectors as demining, which are typically dominated by men, women's greater involvement is evident. In Nigeria, the Mine Action Service allocated half of its funding for local non-governmental organizations to women-led organizations and increased the proportion of women participating in demining training from 13 to 36 per cent. In Iraq, 40 per cent of the national staff of non-governmental organizations that work on demining are women.

45. There are still many challenges in humanitarian action. In such countries as Chad, the Central African Republic or South Sudan, there is one specialized social worker available for every 70 survivors. There is insufficient data on menstrual health and hygiene and sexual and reproductive health, particularly for adolescent girls, displaced women and persons with disabilities. Most displacement tracking systems do not include gender-sensitive indicators on housing security, gender-based violence risks in transit or access to cash assistance. Taken together, these factors result in response plans that fail to meet the differentiated needs of women-headed households, pregnant women, adolescent girls and older women in displacement settings.

46. Among the greatest challenges in supporting women and girls in need of support in humanitarian situations are the restrictions imposed by local authorities. In Afghanistan, the proportion of organizations that report that women humanitarian workers are prevented from undertaking their vital work rose from 22 to 47 per cent in the few months since the publication of the Law on the Propagation of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice in August 2024. In Myanmar, humanitarian aid has been obstructed and instrumentalized, including after the devastating earthquake in March 2025.⁴⁵ In Yemen, the prolonged and arbitrary detention of women humanitarian workers and United Nations staff by the Houthis, coupled with the imposition of travel restrictions on women, have disrupted the delivery of critical aid and have had a chilling effect on women's participation in the humanitarian and civic space. A record number of humanitarian workers were killed in 2024. In Gaza, over 310 team members of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) have been confirmed killed since 7 October 2023, including at least 125 women.

47. The sharp reduction in donor funding across development and humanitarian aid will have a real cost on the lives of women and girls. In Yemen, the suspension of funding had already forced 22 safe spaces to close in early 2025, thereby denying services and support to more than 11,000 women and girls in high-risk areas. In South Sudan, up to 80,000 refugee women and girls were affected by cuts to UNHCR funding.⁴⁶ In Ukraine, 640,000 women and girls were estimated to be affected by cuts to psychosocial support, services to address gender-based violence, safe spaces and economic empowerment programmes supported by UNFPA.⁴⁷ A similar situation may affect other crisis-affected countries, such as Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo or Mali. Funding cuts are reducing education opportunities for Afghan girls and scholarships for Afghan women to study abroad, life-saving medical attention for tens of thousands of survivors of rape in several countries and food for malnourished mothers and their children. Thousands of health clinics are expected to close. Already, women in crisis zones are being forced to give birth without medicines, midwives or equipment, putting their lives and their babies' lives in jeopardy. Shipments of life-saving medical supplies to refugee camps are being disrupted. Many women and girls are dying and more will die, while others will be left with no choice but to adopt dangerous coping mechanisms, from survival sex and human trafficking, to marrying

⁴⁵ See news.un.org/en/story/2025/06/1165041.

⁴⁶ See news.un.org/en/story/2025/07/1165430.

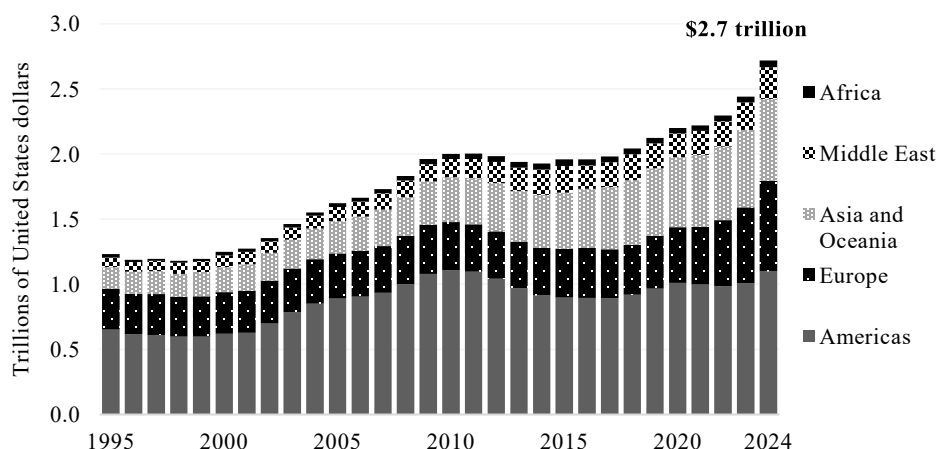
⁴⁷ See news.un.org/en/story/2025/03/1160681.

off or selling their children. The outcome is likely to be more mass displacement, deepening grievances and violent extremism, which will fuel the next wave of warfare.

D. Disarmament and arms control, including disarmament, demobilization and reintegration

48. There was an unprecedented rise in military expenditure as armed conflicts raged on in 2024; over 100 countries around the world raised their military spending and world military expenditure exceeded \$2.7 trillion, an increase of 9.4 per cent in real terms from 2023. That increase reflects the steepest year-on-year rise since at least the end of the cold war (see figure IV). These trends are alarming and the economic and social trade-offs could have significant effects on societies for years to come.⁴⁸

Figure IV
Global military expenditure, 1995–2024



Source: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute Military Expenditure Database (accessed May 2025).

49. The path to peace cannot be found in the accumulation of weapons, but in the investment in tools for peace and in the realization of rights and sustainable development. Women's organizations and networks have consistently called for the redirecting of resources away from military spending towards investments in peacebuilding, protection and sustainable development. In the Pact for the Future, Member States requested the Secretary-General to provide analysis on the impact of the global increase in military expenditure on the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The increases in military spending risk deepening economic and social divides, disproportionately affecting women. Research on the financing of social protection floors indicates that world military spending amounts at present to almost nine times what is needed to fill the financing gap for universal social protection floors in low-income countries.⁴⁹ In the information provided for the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (E/CN.6/2025/3/Rev.1), only 3 per cent of countries and territories

⁴⁸ See www.sipri.org/media/press-release/2025/unprecedented-rise-global-military-expenditure-european-and-middle-east-spending-surges.

⁴⁹ See, for example, International Labour Organization (ILO), *World Social Protection Report 2024–26: Universal Social Protection for Climate Action and a Just Transition* (Geneva, 2024); see also the World Survey on the Role of Women in Development: harnessing social protection for gender equality, resilience and transformation (A/79/111).

reported taking steps to reduce military expenditure or to control the availability of armaments, and only 1 per cent had reallocated funds from military spending to social and economic spending, including for gender equality and the empowerment of women, a decline from 5 per cent in both areas 5 years earlier. Only 38 out of 113 national action plans include references to arms control, ammunition management and disarmament in their monitoring frameworks.

50. Alongside the worrisome trajectory of military spending, the past few years have seen more countries drifting away from disarmament and non-proliferation norms and efforts, including those that relate to preventing any use of nuclear weapons and the use of chemical weapons. Military applications of new and emerging technologies, particularly artificial intelligence, and the escalation and extension of conflict to domains such as cyberspace and outer space are posing new challenges. At the same time, there is a trend towards the modernization and expansion of nuclear arsenals. A further trend has been the alarming erosion of commitments to humanitarian disarmament treaties that are specifically designed to protect civilians. In this connection, the reporting period marked the first-ever withdrawal from a humanitarian disarmament treaty, the Convention on Cluster Munitions, followed by further States indicating an intention to withdraw from the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction. These developments are not making the world safer. Women's groups and movements have been among the leading architects behind many historic arms control movements and are now also vocal advocates against this erosion.⁵⁰

51. In this daunting and increasingly insecure context, it is essential that all disarmament-related negotiations and processes are inclusive. The proportion of women participating in disarmament diplomacy for instance, in the First Committee, has grown steadily from 15 to 38 per cent between 2000 and 2024. Initiatives such as the Women in Cyber Fellowship and the Women in AI Fellowship are contributing to more inclusive and effective global policies in rapidly evolving areas.

52. Reporting under the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons shows that the number of States integrating gender considerations in national arms control has consistently and substantially increased over time (74 per cent of reporting States in 2024). The spread of arms and ammunition contributes directly and decisively to sharp increases in gender-based violence in conflict-affected countries such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan and the Sudan, as well as in Haiti, where gangs are expanding territorial control.⁵¹ It is essential that norms are upheld, including by enforcing arms embargoes, improving weapons tracing and strengthening accountability in arms exports in contexts where gender-based violence is prevalent, as required by the Arms Trade Treaty.

53. Sustained efforts are needed to strengthen the gender responsiveness of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and community violence reduction programmes. The Managing Exits from Armed Conflict project led by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) has contributed unique evidence on journeys into and out of armed groups. Those data can help policymakers and practitioners to prevent armed group recruitment and better support reintegration after involvement in conflict. In 2024, data on gender-specific experiences in conflict were collected through multi-method studies in six countries: Cameroon, Chad, Colombia, Iraq, Niger and Nigeria. Findings from that project illustrate how women

⁵⁰ See [A/79/217](#).

⁵¹ See undir.org/publication/deploying-the-arms-control-and-disarmament-toolbox/.

and girls often exit armed conflict without the necessary support, which stunts their reintegration progress.⁵²

54. Women and girls living near armed conflicts face daily risks from unexploded ordnance and their recovery after war is seriously undermined by extensive contamination of explosive remnants of war. While some assessments, including assessments conducted by the Mine Action Service in settings such as the Central African Republic and Nigeria, have helped to expand our knowledge, gender-disaggregated data on explosive ordnance risks and victims remains incomplete. In some settings, UNIDIR has found that women who survive landmines often have minimal access to rehabilitation support and face social stigma and lifelong disabilities. The Siem Reap-Angkor Action Plan for 2025–2029 provides a road map for the implementation and universalization of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction in support of greater human security. It recognizes the significance of gender and diversity considerations for effective mine action.

E. Political participation and representation

55. Although 2024 was considered a significant electoral year, progress in terms of women's political leadership was minimal. Women were elected in much lower proportions than men, and women candidates experienced gender-based violence, attacks and harassment. While notable historic firsts were achieved in 2024, including the first directly elected women Presidents in Mexico, Namibia and North Macedonia, women as Heads of State or Heads of Government are still the exception, with 102 countries never having had a woman at the helm. At the time of writing, women lead only 29 countries.⁵³

56. Among Cabinet ministers, the global proportion of women heading ministries stands at 23 per cent in 2025, whereas the proportion is slightly lower at 21 per cent in conflict-affected countries.⁵⁴ The data also reveal the persistent barriers that women face in attaining key policymaking positions, particularly in critical areas such as defence and foreign affairs. In several countries, women's representation is very low or non-existent. In Yemen, for instance, there are no women in the Cabinet.⁵⁵ In the Syrian Arab Republic, amid calls for greater inclusion of women in the political transition, only 1 of the 23 ministers appointed by the interim authorities is a woman. Women's global parliamentary representation also remains notably low, at 27 per cent, and drops to 20 per cent in conflict-affected countries.⁵⁶ At the local level, women hold 35.5 per cent of seats in deliberative bodies globally, dropping to 18 per cent in conflict-affected countries – nearly half the global average.⁵⁷

57. Women remain significantly underrepresented in diplomacy. As of 2024, women made up only 21 per cent of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations, with just 7 per cent of all ambassadors since 1947 being women, and 73 countries never having

⁵² See unidir.org/publication/survival-and-struggle-the-experience-of-women-and-girls-with-and-after-boko-haram/.

⁵³ UN-Women data on women Heads of State and Government, as of September 2025.

⁵⁴ UN-Women analysis based on www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2025/03/women-in-politics-map-2025.

⁵⁵ See www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2025/06/poster-women-political-leaders-2025.

⁵⁶ Inter-Parliamentary Union, "Women in politics" (as of 1 January 2025). The average percentage in conflict-affected countries was analysed by UN-Women.

⁵⁷ UN-Women, "Women in local government" (data as at 1 January 2024).

appointed a woman as Permanent Representative. Women's representation in diplomatic missions continues to lag behind that of men, especially in top-ranking roles.⁵⁸

58. In its general recommendation No. 40 (2024) on the equal and inclusive representation of women in decision-making systems, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women states that targets of 30 per cent for the representation of women in decision-making are incompatible with the Convention's core aim of elimination of discrimination against women, and that decision-making will have real and dynamic meaning and lasting effect only when it is based on fifty-fifty parity and takes equal account of the interests of both women and men. Temporary special measures such as gender quotas have proven their effectiveness in increasing women's participation. At present, less than half of Member States have legislated gender quotas. In conflict-affected countries, women make up of 25 per cent of members of parliament where quotas are in place, on average, compared with just 14 per cent where no quotas exist. At the local level, quotas double women's representation – 22 per cent versus 11 per cent in countries without such quotas.⁵⁹ For instance, Georgia saw a substantial increase in women's leadership in municipal bodies, to 30 per cent, up from 13.4 per cent in 2021. However, in April 2024, the Parliament of Georgia decided to end mandatory electoral gender quotas, which risks undoing progress towards a more gender-balanced political landscape.

59. In 2024, the United Nations continued its efforts to advance gender equality in decision-making through technical support, policy advocacy and capacity-building initiatives. In Colombia, UN-Women engagement with the parliament contributed to the adoption of a parity law that mandates equal representation of women and men across public institutions and branches of power. In Liberia, technical assistance to the National Elections Commission supported the development of a gender equality and social inclusion policy, which commits to fifty-fifty representation in decision-making roles and prioritizes the inclusion of women and persons with disabilities. In Haiti, sustained advocacy by the United Nations for the inclusion of women in the political transition contributed to the appointment of four women in the Provisional Electoral Council. The United Nations also helped to defuse tensions before and after elections, including by co-leading a multi-stakeholder effort in Sierra Leone that resulted in an Agreement on National Unity between the Government and the main opposition party. The agreement included recommendations to advance gender parity at all levels, reduce candidate nomination fees by half and draw attention to electoral violence against women.

60. The democratic safeguards that women's human rights and peacebuilding depend on, including the rule of law, are being undermined. The right to equal participation in political and public affairs must be protected. Women's representation in elected or appointed positions, including diplomatic appointments, is a well-documented pathway to women's direct participation – as mediators and negotiators – at peace tables. In view of narrowing trends, vigilance and close monitoring is required, including the tracking of regressive laws and policies, in order to effectively respond to the clawback of women's rights and freedoms.

F. Economic recovery and access to resources

61. Investing in women's economic security and opportunities during transitions from conflict to peace has been consistently recommended both as a conflict prevention strategy and as an effective relief and recovery intervention over the past 25 years. Those recommendations notwithstanding, investments in that area remain

⁵⁸ See www.un.org/en/observances/women-in-diplomacy-day.

⁵⁹ UN-Women calculations. See also <https://genderquota.org/>.

underprioritized. Conflicts affect women disproportionately: they lose their jobs first, eat less and take up additional unpaid care responsibilities, which is compounded by discriminatory gender norms that also impede women's ownership of land and property and access to inheritance, credit, technology and banking. A quarter of a century after resolution 1325 (2000) was adopted, economic empowerment initiatives that target women are still typically small in scale and are generally absent from peace agreements, post-conflict reforms and large-scale reconstruction packages. In conflict-affected and post-crisis contexts, women continue to face limited access to decent work, financial services, social protection, property rights and entrepreneurship opportunities.

62. These economic circumstances have been made worse by the proliferation and intensification of conflicts and the high rates of inflation since 2022 that have driven up food and energy crises. Declining development financing and increasing debt distress have further limited investments in women's economic empowerment. Women in fragile environments are 7.7 times more likely to live in extreme poverty compared with those in stable regions.⁶⁰ In Haiti, the garment industry has experienced a sharp reduction in operational capacity due to the security crisis, leading to layoffs that have mostly affected women, who make up two thirds of the workforce in textile factories. In Lebanon, the escalation of hostilities in late 2024 disrupted farming activities across a quarter of cultivable land, with particularly severe consequences for women involved in agriculture. In South Sudan, inflation reached 107 per cent in 2024, up from less than 2 per cent the year before, worsening malnutrition and food insecurity for women and children, which were already at record levels. In Ukraine, the deployment of men to the front lines has opened opportunities for women in industries that were previously dominated by men, from coal mines to dairy farms, truck driving, police work or demining, and 59 per cent of new businesses started in the first half of 2024 were led by women.⁶¹ Nevertheless, the general trend since the full-scale invasion by the Russian Federation is that women's share of the workforce has dropped, their unpaid care responsibilities have increased considerably and the earnings gap between men and women has more than doubled. In the Sudan, women earn 82 per cent less than men, one of the world's widest gaps. The representation of women in the workforce in Afghanistan and Yemen is in the single digits, the lowest in the world. The Taliban have been gradually closing off pathways for women to generate an income, at a projected cost of close to \$1 billion between 2024 and 2026 for the economy of Afghanistan.⁶²

63. The feminization of poverty is not just the result of inequality in economic opportunities, but of a lack of social protection. In 2024, a comprehensive study by UN-Women of nearly 1,000 social protection measures adopted by governments across 171 countries in the months that followed the rise of global inflation showed that only 18 per cent of measures targeted women's economic security,⁶³ that effective coverage was extremely low in conflict-affected countries and that men were more protected than women in several of these contexts with available data, such as Afghanistan, Mali, Myanmar or Yemen.

64. Too often, efforts to invest in women's economic security are reduced to one-time business grants, microfinance and trainings, and too little is reflected in employment policies, fiscal policies and large-scale reconstruction rescue packages

⁶⁰ UN-Women and United Nations, *Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals: The Gender Snapshot 2023* (New York, 2023).

⁶¹ See www.unwomen.org/en/news-stories/feature-story/2025/06/ukrainian-women-at-the-frontlines-of-resistance-and-recovery#:~:text=Women%20are%20powering%20Ukraine's%20wartime,economy%2C%20businesses%20and%20families%20afloat.

⁶² United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), *Afghanistan Socio-Economic Review: Fragile Gains, Deepening Subsistence Insecurity, 2023–2024* (2025).

⁶³ See A/79/111.

and post-conflict financing. In Ukraine, an analysis found that while official development assistance increased fourteen-fold from 2021 to 2022, only 0.2 per cent was allocated to advance gender equality as the principal objective.⁶⁴ In order to counter this trend, the Government of Ukraine collaborated with Germany and UN.Women to launch an alliance that brings together 15 Governments, major international financial institutions, civil society and the private sector, so as to improve funding and financing for gender equality in the country's recovery.

65. Positive examples of interventions by the United Nations show that it is possible to make a tangible difference in women's lives even in the most difficult environments. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has provided finance, equipment and training to 80,000 women-led businesses in Afghanistan since August 2021 and enabled more than 27,000 women to gain access to revolving loans through women-led community savings groups. The UNDP global programme on advancing fiscal reforms for women's economic justice, known as "Equanomics", targeted 15 fragile and crisis-affected countries and supported, for example, the creation of a gender tax observatory in Lebanon. In Iraq, the International Labour Organization has influenced reforms in national employment strategies and laws, resulting in improved workplace protections, equal pay initiatives and better childcare services. Women's representation in trade union leadership and collective bargaining has also increased, leading to more attention being given to measures to prevent and address gender-based violence and harassment at work. In Colombia, the United Nations continues to support the Government's land reform efforts in order to close the gender gap in women's access to land, as nearly two thirds of single-owner rural properties belong to men, and 75 per cent of land plots owned by women measure less than three hectares.⁶⁵

G. Rule of law and women's access to justice

66. One of the clearest examples of progress in the implementation of Security Council resolutions on women and peace and security over the past 25 years has been the investigation and prosecution of international crimes against women and girls. Such measures are the result of decades of legal action, advocacy and activism led by survivors and women's organizations and important jurisprudence built by national and international courts, benefiting in part from a significant increase in the number of women who serve as judges.⁶⁶ This jurisprudence has been primarily focused on sexual violence but has expanded in more recent years to include gender-based persecution, crimes on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity, and reproductive violence.

67. While impunity remains widespread, crimes against women and girls are no longer buried in silence but are documented by the United Nations and other actors. Every commission of inquiry or fact-finding mission mandated by the United Nations over the past 15 years has included expertise on the investigation of gender-based crimes provided by UN-Women. Several countries have increasingly resorted to universal jurisdiction to prosecute these crimes. The United Nations has expanded its support to national accountability mechanisms, and every year, gender justice milestones are achieved through cases adjudicated before international courts and through hundreds of trials in national courts, including special courts established for

⁶⁴ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), "Official development assistance for gender equality in Ukraine in 2022" (2024).

⁶⁵ See data.unwomen.org/features/growing-rural-womens-land-ownership-across-colombias-country-side.

⁶⁶ See gqualcampaign.org/data/current-composition/.

this specific purpose, as well as through military courts and mobile courts. Such milestones were notably achieved in the past year. A former commander of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) became the first LRA commander to be convicted of rape, among other crimes, in a Ugandan court. In Guatemala, more than four decades after Guatemalan soldiers and paramilitaries raped Indigenous women during the country's civil war, a national court convicted three men after 36 Indigenous Maya Achi women came forward in 2011 to seek justice for the crimes committed against them.⁶⁷ In July 2024, the Criminal Court of Dixinn in Guinea convicted eight high-ranking officials for crimes against humanity related to the massacre and mass rapes that were committed on 28 September 2009. The universal jurisdiction case against civilian and military officials of Myanmar concerning allegations of genocide and crimes against humanity, including sexual and gender-based crimes, is proceeding in Argentina, with arrest warrants for 25 officials issued in February 2025.⁶⁸ In Kosovo, the number of indictments for sexual violence committed during the conflict over the course of 1998 and 1999 increased to 10 in 2024, compared to only a handful in the previous 25 years.

68. For the 30-year review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action, 37 per cent of countries reported having strengthened the institutional capacities of the justice system, including transitional justice, as part of conflict response.⁶⁹ In many cases, these efforts consist of initiatives to increase women's participation in the justice sector and train professionals across the justice chain. Whereas reparations have long been considered one of the most underutilized tools in transitional justice and accountability efforts, recent years have seen thousands of women in the Central African Republic, Colombia, Iraq, Uganda and Ukraine, as well as in Kosovo and in other contexts, receive reparations and interim reparative measures through judicial and administrative processes. However, women's access to justice is still precarious or nearly non-existent in many conflict-affected settings. Every woman judge in Afghanistan has been removed from the judiciary since the Taliban took power, erasing decades of progress in terms of women's representation in the legal system. In Haiti, no women were appointed to the new Superior Council of the Judiciary.

69. In places where the prospects of justice for women seem distant, international courts can play a role. The case brought by the Gambia against Myanmar at the International Court of Justice alleges violations of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide through, inter alia, murder, rape and other types of sexual violence perpetrated by the military.⁷⁰ In July 2025, the International Criminal Court issued arrest warrants against two Taliban leaders, stating that there are reasonable grounds to believe that they have committed crimes against humanity by ordering, inducing or soliciting the crime against humanity of persecution on gender and political grounds. A coalition of countries has called upon the Taliban to cease violations of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.⁷¹

⁶⁷ See www.reuters.com/world/americas/guatemalan-ex-paramilitaries-sentenced-40-years-each-maya-achi-rape-trial-2025-05-30/.

⁶⁸ See www.globaljusticecenter.net/update-the-universal-jurisdiction-case-against-myanmar-officials/.

⁶⁹ See E/CN.6/2025/3/Rev.1.

⁷⁰ See www.icj-cij.org/case/178.

⁷¹ See www.dfat.gov.au/news/media-release/launch-initiative-accountability-afghanistans-violations-cedaw-declaration.

H. Security sector reform and women's participation in national security institutions

70. In 2024, the United Nations published its first-ever global report with data on women's status across military forces.⁷² The report reveals that several Member States have achieved significant increases in the proportion of women in their military ranks over the past decade.⁷³ Out of 53 countries reporting, 77 per cent mentioned having integrated gender equality into their national defence strategies, policies and plans. However, women's representation in defence roles remains low overall. Among the countries that responded to the survey, only 12 per cent of army personnel, 15 per cent of air force members, 14 per cent of navy personnel and 16 per cent of gendarmerie members are women. On average, the proportion of women in the armed forces rose from 11 per cent in 2016 to 14 per cent in 2022. Women in senior military leadership positions remain a rarity with 97 per cent of flag and star-ranked officers (generals and admirals) being men, and fewer than 1 in 10 senior officers and about 1 in 6 junior officers being women. Women are more commonly assigned to support services, and even when permitted by law to join combat units, their participation therein remain low, around 10 per cent.

71. The report shows that the lack of support for family and childcare responsibilities is one of the primary barriers to women's recruitment and retention in defence institutions or in the defence sector, followed by masculine institutional cultures and entrenched societal gender stereotypes. While several countries have developed gender strategies that are specific to defence and interior ministries, the absence of barrier assessments and data, including in defence oversight mechanisms, the exclusion of gender commitments from military budgets and the lack of tailored implementation plans for each military branch and governance structure have hindered the effective operationalization of these strategies. The report contains a call for all Member States to identify barriers to women's participation, improve recruitment efforts, enhance retention, foster inclusive cultures, combat sexual discrimination and harassment, support career development and ensure fair promotion opportunities for women.

72. Among the 159 countries that responded to the UN-Women survey for the 30-year review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, 69 per cent of conflict-affected countries reported having strengthened the capacity of security sector institutions on human rights and the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence and sexual exploitation and abuse. Common actions include: undertaking barrier assessments to identify obstacles to women's participation in national security sectors; and implementing and adjusting recruitment targets and policies, including changes in eligibility, as well as strategies on accommodation, equipment, childcare and outreach. Other efforts have been focused on: preventing sexual harassment, sexual exploitation and abuse, and conflict-related sexual violence; promoting awareness of gender equality and human rights issues among security actors; or strengthening oversight and vetting mechanisms.

73. In 2024, the Elsie Initiative Fund for Uniformed Women in Peace Operations was instrumental in incentivizing the recruitment of women in countries that contribute troops and police to peacekeeping missions. For example, the Fund supported recruitment campaigns that reached over 21,000 students in Ghana and contributed to a rise in women's recruitment from 16 per cent in 2021 to 26 per cent

⁷² United Nations, *Towards Equal Opportunity for Women in the Defence Sector* (New York, 2024).

⁷³ In some countries, this percentage increase was over 15 points, including in: Argentina, Australia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ghana, Mongolia, Nigeria, South Africa and Uruguay.

in 2024.⁷⁴ The Fund's partnership with Senegal has led to greater representation of women in the police force, from 9 to 15 per cent, and a budget allocation approved by the National Assembly to fund the work and activities of the gender units established in the armed forces and the gendarmerie.

I. Preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism

74. The connection between women and peace and security and efforts aimed at counter-terrorism and the prevention of violent extremism has been well established in many Security Council resolutions and in United Nations policy over the past decade, but is much less so in practice by security and counter-terrorism actors. The ideology, strategy and funding of the most notorious terrorist groups are shaped by misogyny, militarized masculinities and the manipulation of gender roles and norms. Yet counter-terrorism efforts by military and security institutions and predominantly led by men and prone to gender stereotypes and biases. Communities with a high degree of gender equality are more resilient to violent extremism.⁷⁵ Women remain underrepresented in the design and implementation of the interventions that receive most of the funding and attention, and yet they are effective actors in preventing violent extremism in their communities. In Somalia, for example, as part of the joint programme on women, peace and protection, 17 women's networks play a key role in Programme on Women, Peace and Protection preventing the recruitment of youth into violent extremist groups and support community reintegration efforts.

75. In recent years, the concentration of terrorist activity has shifted out of the Middle East and into the Central Sahel region and other parts of sub-Saharan Africa, such as the Lake Chad basin, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mozambique or Somalia, which together account for almost 60 per cent of deaths caused by terrorism. There is very little information about the lives of women and girls in areas controlled by these groups, in part because of lack of access and fear of retaliation for sharing information. In Somalia, Al-Shabaab uses conflict-related sexual violence against women and girls as a strategy to subjugate communities under its control, as well as abduction and forced marriage as a form of compensation to its fighters and to forge ties with prominent clan leaders. In the Central Sahel, terrorist groups have imposed rigorous social rules that suppress human rights, especially those of women and girls. Hostage-taking of women and girls increased by 218 per cent in Burkina Faso in 2024. Across the region, many women displaced by the presence of these groups have lost access to their plots of lands and livestock, while market closures make it impossible for them to sell their products. Approximately 1 million girls are deprived of education in Burkina Faso, Mali and the Niger because of the closure of thousands of schools. In the Lake Chad basin, the scale of grave violations against girls perpetrated by terrorist groups was particularly high, with 60 per cent more girls than boys being victims of grave violations verified by the United Nations in 2024.

76. The situation of women and girls held in the Al-Hol and Al-Roj camps and those held in places of detention in other facilities in the north-east of the Syrian Arab Republic for alleged affiliation with Da'esh (Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant) remains dire and unsustainable from a security, human rights and humanitarian perspective. In Iraq, women who have returned from those camps face barriers in obtaining legal documentation, often requiring a man's consent or denouncing a relative linked to Da'esh.

⁷⁴ See <https://elsiefund.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/EIF-AR-2024.pdf>.

⁷⁵ UN-Women, "Global digital consultation: civil society voices on the gendered dimensions of violent extremism and counter-terrorism responses" (2021).

J. Climate change and its implications for peace and security

77. Climate change exacerbates the risks brought about by rising conflicts and compounds existing vulnerabilities and tensions. UNHCR estimates that 90 million forcibly displaced people are living in countries with high-to-extreme exposure to climate-related hazards and that nearly half of all forcibly displaced people are bearing the burden of both conflict and the adverse effects of climate change. These include such countries as the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Haiti, Lebanon, Myanmar, Somalia, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen.⁷⁶

78. Multiple international frameworks and policy documents recognize how the effects of climate change, environmental degradation and natural resource scarcity are aggravating insecurity and instability worldwide. A growing body of research shows how the climate crisis amplifies existing gender inequalities and risks and poses unique threats to women's and girls' livelihoods, safety and security.⁷⁷ Natural resource extraction drives conflict and human rights abuses against women and girls, including in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Myanmar, where armed groups fight for control of minerals and other valuable commodities.⁷⁸

79. Efforts are under way to strengthen gender-responsive climate risk assessments and action. For instance, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, UN-Women and the Start Network are part of an evolving global initiative to improve predictive analytics that consider women's differential exposure to climate-related risks and mobility patterns and integrate gender analysis into anticipatory action frameworks in the Sahel and Horn of Africa.

80. National action plans on women and peace and security can be important tools for better connecting gender, climate and peace efforts. The number of such plans that include climate references increased from 43 in 2023 to 53 in June 2025. However, it is important to move beyond just a reference to climate and into specific action. New guidance grounded in experiences from the Asia-Pacific region provides practical examples of how to integrate climate change into such plans in a way that they can be adapted to local contexts.⁷⁹

81. At the twenty-ninth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Baku, as part of discussions on unlocking financing for gender-responsive climate security and peace, participants outlined the need for prioritizing direct funding for women's organizations. The Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund actively contributes to closing the funding gap through the Women and Climate Security Funding Initiative⁸⁰ with a goal of mobilizing up to \$25 million. Since its launch at twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, the Initiative has secured an initial investment of \$6 million to support women's organizations, with projects focused on promoting gender-responsive environmental governance so as to reduce conflicts and strengthen women's leadership in sustainable agriculture, climate adaptation and peacebuilding.

⁷⁶ See www.unhcr.org/publications/no-escape-frontlines-climate-change-conflict-and-forced-displacement.

⁷⁷ See www.gender-nr-peace.org/about.

⁷⁸ See www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/11/military-coup-has-exacerbated-already-severe-climate-risks-myanmar-un and www.amnesty.org/en/location/africa/east-africa-the-horn-and-great-lakes/democratic-republic-of-the-congo/report-democratic-republic-of-the-congo/.

⁷⁹ See asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/stories/feature-story/2025/06/un-women-launches-women-peace-and-climate-security-guide-for-asia-and-the-pacific.

⁸⁰ See wphfund.org/women-and-climate-security/.

82. Women human rights defenders, grass-roots feminist groups and Indigenous women, including young advocates who stand up for the environment, continue to routinely be sidelined in climate negotiations and decision-making and face a range of threats, violence and retaliation. The upcoming thirtieth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, to be held in Belém, Brazil, in November 2025, and the elaboration of new gender action plans provide important opportunities to deepen the understanding of the linkages between gender, natural resources, climate and peace and to enhance protection of environmental defenders and peacebuilders, prevent gender-based violence, promote women's participation and leadership and advance access to financing, as well as to close gaps in relation to gender-specific climate data, including in conflict and crisis settings.

IV. Action to realize women and peace and security commitments

A. Planning for action and monitoring results at the national and regional levels

83. While multiple actors play key roles in the realization of the women and peace and security agenda, Member States have the primary responsibility to ensure that global obligations and commitments on women and peace and security are integrated into domestic policies, laws, planning and budget processes. As such, how close or far away countries are from realizing the agenda's vision of peace and equality is directly linked with the actions and decisions that Member States take domestically, as well as in regional and international forums.

84. The remarkable growth over the past two decades in the number of countries and territories adopting national action plans on women and peace and security and the rise in dedicated regional frameworks and feminist foreign policies gives grounds for hope. The increase in the number of actors joining groups of champions of the agenda such as the Women, Peace and Security Focal Points Network, currently chaired by Japan and Norway, now boasting 106 members, is also encouraging.⁸¹ In addition, the number of signatories that have joined the Compact on Women, Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action has more than doubled since its launch in 2021, reaching 242 in 2025.⁸² However, this impressive show of commitment and support for the agenda must be put into practice when and where it matters the most, especially as gender equality and women's human rights are under threat in many contexts.

85. Since the adoption of the first national action plan on women and peace and security in 2005, 58 per cent of Member States have adopted at least one such plan, bringing the total to 113 as of June 2025, including territories. In 2024 alone, nine new plans were adopted, including the first ever plans in Colombia, Ecuador, Viet Nam and Zimbabwe. For plans to create impact, however, adequate budgets are fundamental. Many countries and territories still struggle to fully finance their plans and rely on external support for implementation. As we mark 25 years of the women and peace and security agenda, it is time to reimagine the role of national action plans as more than policy frameworks on the periphery of peace and security processes. Instead, they should serve as strategic blueprints for conflict prevention and crisis response, requiring stronger institutionalization – not only within the security sector, but across interconnected areas such as climate action or recovery and reconstruction. The growing use of multi-stakeholder steering committees for those plans is encouraging, as it presents opportunities to strengthen cross-thematic coordination,

⁸¹ See wpsfocalpointsnetwork.org/.

⁸² See wpscompact.org/.

financing and data collection. More than a dozen countries have adopted local action plans, which allow for deeper contextualization of interventions, including through conflict resolution at the local level and, in some contexts, actual funding for implementation.

86. National human rights institutions and international human rights mechanisms, as well as investigations, remain a vital part of upholding accountability for commitments related to the women and peace and security agenda and of ensuring that human rights are protected in conflict and crisis settings. In 2024, among 30 conflict-affected countries with data, 18 (60 per cent) had national human rights institutions. Over the past 25 years, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women has played a vital role in promoting women's human rights in conversations about peace and security. The Committee's work in this regard includes its concluding observations regarding conflict-affected States parties, exceptional sessions of the Committee and its reporting on conflict contexts, as well as its general recommendations, including its general recommendation no. 30 (2013) on women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations and its general recommendation no. 40 (2024) on the equal and inclusive representation of women in decision-making systems.

B. Leadership, coordination and accountability within the United Nations

87. Since his previous report, the Secretary-General and the United Nations system have taken several steps to ensure that the Organization delivers on its commitments to women and peace and security, accelerates progress on gender equality and leads by example. In follow-up to the launch of the United Nations System-wide Gender Equality Acceleration Plan in 2024,⁸³ the Secretary-General issued the Gender Equality Clarion Call in 2025, in which he set out a system-wide commitment and strong leadership policy stance for actively confronting the gender backlash, preventing rollbacks and advancing gender equality and the human rights of all women and girls through every aspect of United Nations work.

88. Several actions were taken to ensure leadership accountability and delivery on the Secretary-General's 10 core commitments on women and peace and security (see [S/2019/800](#)) by 2026. All heads of mission were directly reminded of their responsibility for their implementation, and in response to the persistent underrepresentation of women in peace and political processes globally, the Secretary-General now convenes all his envoys and special representatives in the field on an annual basis to discuss this issue. During the first such meeting, in March 2025, he made an urgent call for intensified efforts to advance women's participation in all ways possible, urging United Nations missions on the ground to confront the ongoing gender backlash and ensure that women's voices are neither marginalized nor silenced. There is room for improvement when it comes to the application of gender analysis and reporting.

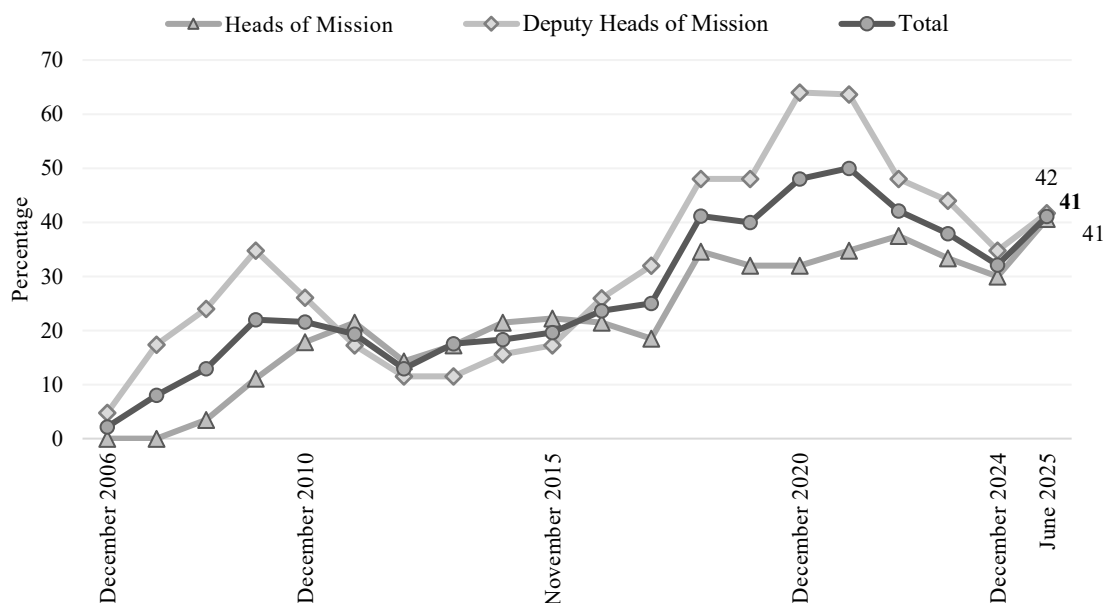
89. The United Nations has remained firm in its commitment to achieve and maintain gender parity among senior leadership globally. The parity reached in 2021 for the first time among heads and deputy heads of missions has since declined, however. As of June 2025, the share of heads of missions was the highest ever recorded (see figure V). The Secretary-General's global call for nominations in 2024 garnered the highest number of Member State nominations and individual

⁸³ See www.un.org/en/gender-equality-acceleration-plan.

applications to date, and 55 per cent of nominees proposed by Member States were women.

Figure V

Representation of women in United Nations mission leadership as a percentage of total posts, December 2006–June 2025



Source: Leadership Support Section, Department of Peace Operations and Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (June 2025).

90. The United Nations system has been entrusted to deliver on a wide range of key women and peace and security mandates across its normative work and operations, which requires dedicated and specialized technical expertise. The situations in which gender expertise has made a difference include: policy decisions informed by context-specific gender analysis that resulted in normative advances and breakthroughs; increased effectiveness in peace operations; more efficient crisis responses and better equipped surge capacities; improved services for survivors of gender-based violence; and more inclusive processes overall, ensuring that needs are not overlooked and all voices are heard. Over the past quarter of a century, an evolving gender architecture has been built to respond to conflicts and crises in United Nations peacekeeping operations, special political missions and country teams, including in the form of surge capacities and through the creation of UN-Women in 2010. Still, several crises lack dedicated full-time gender personnel, especially in mid-sized or protracted operations, and field-level gender work often relies on voluntary or part-time contributions, which leads to inconsistency in quality, coverage and influence. As the United Nations adapts to the current financing landscape, it will be important to strengthen this architecture.

C. Financing for women and peace and security

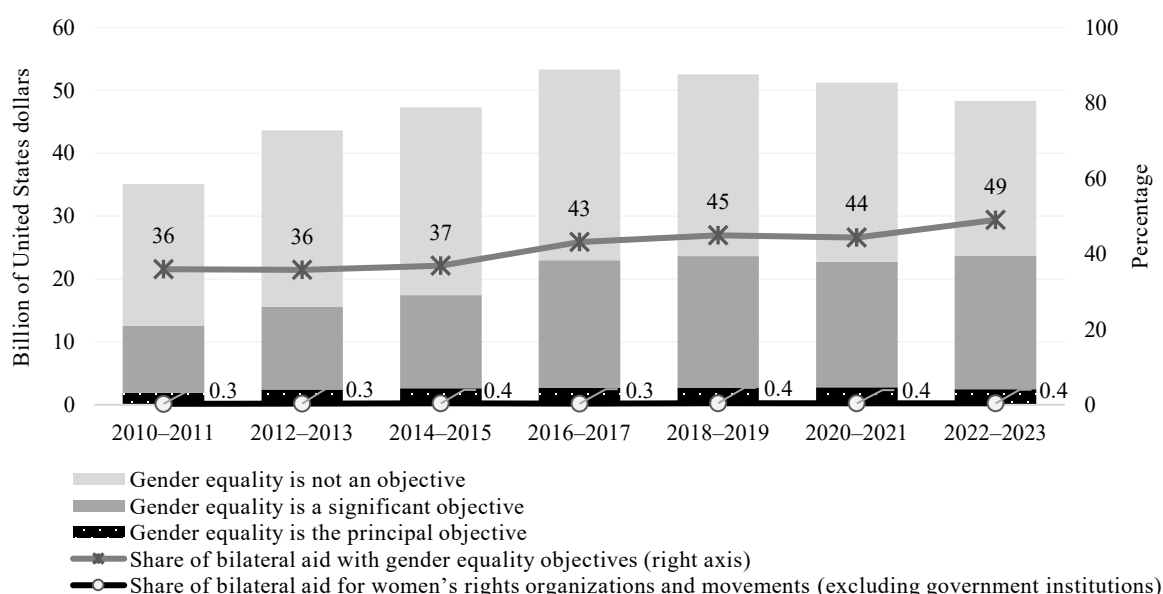
91. Financing for peace, development and the realization of rights, including gender equality, is dropping, while the needs are rising. In the report on the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (E/CN.6/2025/3/Rev.1), it was found that funding for women and peace and security and humanitarian action has failed to match the scale of the challenge. With less than

five years until the 2030 deadline for the Sustainable Development Goals, the global community must course-correct, with the compass firmly set on realizing these Goals and commitments.

92. The latest available data on bilateral official development assistance (ODA),⁸⁴ covering the biennium 2022–2023, show that bilateral aid to contexts with high and extreme fragility⁸⁵ stood at \$50 billion on average per year, with the share of ODA with gender equality objectives rising from 44 to 49 per cent (see figure VI). However, only \$2.5 billion (5.2 per cent) was dedicated to gender equality as a principal objective,⁸⁶ a slight drop from 5.4 per cent previously. Bilateral aid supporting women’s rights organizations and movements (excluding government institutions) in high and extreme fragility contexts remained at a low level of \$186 million (0.4 per cent of bilateral aid to conflict-affected contexts) on average per year in 2022–2023, a decrease from \$205 million in 2020–2021. This share remains below the minimum allocation of 1 per cent of ODA to women’s organizations in conflict-affected countries recommended by the United Nations.⁸⁷ Meeting recommended targets should be a priority, especially when considering the potential positive impact that a significant scaling up of support for women’s organizations could have on sustainable peace and development and community well-being.

Figure VI

Bilateral aid in support of gender equality and women’s rights in contexts with high and extreme fragility, annual average per biennium (2010–2011 to 2022–2023)



Source: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Creditor Reporting System database, accessed 12 May 2025.

Note: Bilateral aid from Development Assistance Committee members.

⁸⁴ Bilateral aid provides a partial picture. However, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)-Development Assistance Committee figures provide the most comparable data over time and give a good indication of overall trends.

⁸⁵ In 2025, OECD identified 61 contexts experiencing high or extreme levels of fragility, representing the most severe impacts of crisis, conflict and instability.

⁸⁶ According to the OECD Development Assistance Committee gender equality policy marker, “principal objective” refers to gender equality being the main objective of the project/programme and that it is fundamental to its design and expected results.

⁸⁷ See S/2023/725; and United Nations, “Our Common Agenda policy brief 9: A New Agenda for Peace”, July 2023 (A/77/CRP.1/Add.8), action 5.

93. Preliminary data from OECD indicate that in 2024, for the first time in six years, international aid from official donors fell by 7.1 per cent in real terms compared with 2023.⁸⁸ Among the 33 members of the Development Assistance Committee, one third of members' aid for countries with high and extreme fragility focused less on gender equality in 2022–2023 than it did in 2020–2021. Analysis also shows that commitments to gender equality remain unevenly integrated across development themes and sectors.⁸⁹ Humanitarian aid continues to have a low focus on gender equality, with only about 20 per cent of bilateral assistance dedicated to interventions where gender equality is a principal or significant objective. In addition, aid towards such vital areas as sexual and reproductive health funding is already insufficient and often restricted. Further significant cuts announced more recently include donors that had previously stood out in terms of their support for gender equality in countries affected by conflict and crises. These changes contrast sharply with the recommendation adopted last year by the Development Assistance Committee. Several United Nations entities and organizations have issued stark warnings about the worsening funding crisis and the impact of deep funding cuts witnessed over the past year. Those most affected were already among the most vulnerable, raising concerns that the pledge made in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to leave no one behind may not be fully realized.

94. These cuts are an existential threat to women-led and women's rights organizations on the front lines of today's conflicts and humanitarian crises. In March 2025, UN-Women conducted a rapid global survey⁹⁰ to understand the impact of these funding reductions on local women-led groups in crisis settings. The results are alarming: 90 per cent of respondents said that their operations were financially affected, nearly half expect to shut down within six months and most have already reduced staff or suspended key services. In several contexts, these organizations are a lifeline to those in need.

95. Within the United Nations, efforts have continued to ensure that the Organization delivers on its gender equality and women and peace and security commitments despite facing a deepening budgetary crisis due to shortfalls in Member State contributions. Several steps were taken to build capacity across the United Nations system to track and deliver on the minimum 15 per cent target, which the Gender Equality Acceleration Plan has established as a system-wide standard. In 2024, 42 entities reported on applying the gender equality marker. Among them, 55 per cent applied it across all budget sources, while 45 per cent applied it selectively.⁹¹ More country teams have used the marker in their joint workplans. In 2024, 24 of 113 country teams (one fifth) with a joint workplan allocated 15 per cent or more of the available resources under their annual funding framework to activities with gender equality as the principal objective.⁹²

96. Pooled funds for supporting initiatives in conflict and crisis-affected settings can play a critical role in advancing gender equality and the women and peace and security agenda. The Peacebuilding Fund remains the largest multi-partner trust fund dedicated to support peace efforts and transitions. To date, it has funded projects in over 60 countries. The Fund is also experiencing the effects of the current financing

⁸⁸ See www.oecd.org/en/about/news/press-releases/2025/04/official-development-assistance-2024-figures.html?utm_source=twitter&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=ODA&utm_content=en&utm_term=pac.

⁸⁹ See www.oecd.org/en/publications/development-finance-for-gender-equality-2024_e340afbf-en.html.

⁹⁰ See www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2025/05/at-a-breaking-point-the-impact-of-foreign-aid-cuts-on-womens-organizations-in-humanitarian-crises-worldwide.

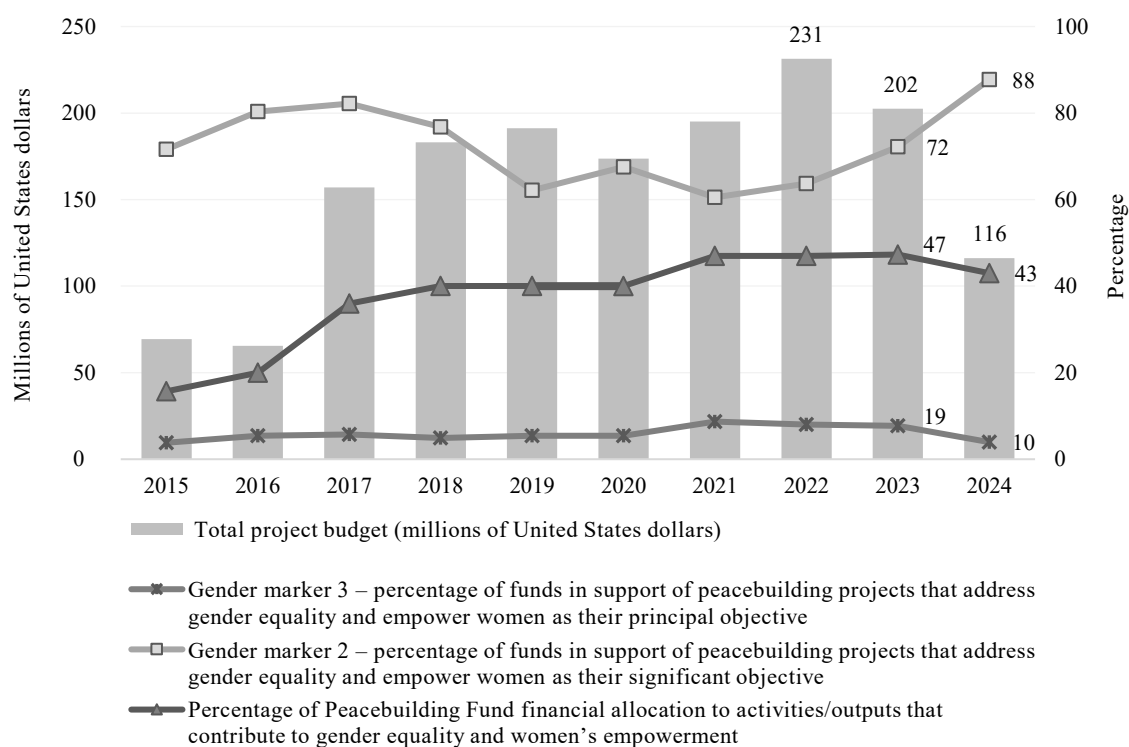
⁹¹ See E/2025/58.

⁹² Data from UN INFO (<https://www.uninfo.org/>) accessed 2 June 2025.

climate. There has been a noticeable drop in voluntary contributions at a time when support requested for peacebuilding and prevention efforts has increased.⁹³ In 2024, the Fund approved \$116 million (compared with \$202 million in 2023), of which \$49.9 million (43 per cent) was focused on supporting gender equality, compared to 95.8 million (47.3 per cent) in 2023 (figure VII).

Figure VII

Peacebuilding Fund allocations to projects promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women, 2015–2024



Source: Data from the Peacebuilding Support Office of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (accessed June 2025).

Note: The financial allocation of 43 per cent in support of gender equality in 2024 (line with triangles) was tracked at the output or activity level, instead of at the project level. The percentage is calculated as the sum of financial allocations to projects with gender equality as a principal objective (i.e. gender marker 3 projects) and the allocations within gender marker 2 and gender marker 1 projects that contribute to gender equality.

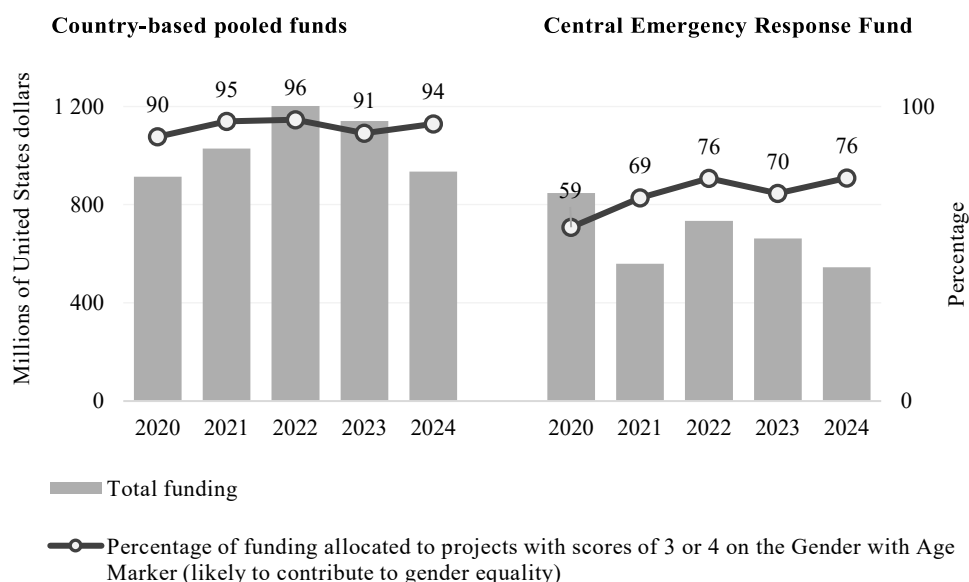
97. In 2024, the Peacebuilding Support Office of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs advanced several gender-responsive initiatives with international financial institutions, notably the World Bank. These included supporting a strategic engagement plan between the Spotlight Initiative and the World Bank, which is aimed at addressing gender inequality and violence against women and girls in conflict settings, and a United Nations–World Bank project in the Democratic Republic of the Congo that is focused on women's participation in peacebuilding and stabilization efforts. As countries ravaged by violence and war begin to heal and rebuild, it is important that development finance partners, including multilateral development banks, undertake gendered impact assessments in post-conflict financing so as to ensure that recovery efforts benefit all.

⁹³ https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/pbf_sg_report_summary_2024_web.pdf.

98. For humanitarian funds, the Gender with Age Marker continued to guide funding allocations across all country-based pooled funds managed by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Central Emergency Response Fund. In 2024, the country-based pooled funds allocated \$935 million (94 per cent of total funding) and the Central Emergency Response Fund allocated \$545 million (74 per cent of total funding) to projects that contributed to gender equality across age groups (see figure VIII).

Figure VIII

Funding allocated by the Central Emergency Response Fund and country-based pooled funds to projects that contribute to gender equality, as measured by the Gender with Age Marker, 2020–2024



Source: Data on the Gender with Age Marker from the country-based pooled funds database, available at https://cbpf.data.unocha.org/#gam_heading (accessed June 2025); and from the annual results report of the Central Emergency Response Fund (accessed June 2025).

99. Notably, in 2024, allocations from the country-based pooled funds to women-led organizations in humanitarian contexts increased from 7 to 11 per cent of total disbursements (\$101.6 million), which reflects steady, if modest, progress towards the 15 per cent benchmark set under the Grand Bargain on humanitarian financing and funding guidance in relation to women-led organizations. All advisory boards of the country-based pooled funds are now required to include at least one representative from a women-led organization, which has helped to improve the visibility and voice of women in allocation decisions. Nevertheless, progress remains uneven across countries. In the Sudan, for example, only 3 per cent of the Sudan Humanitarian Fund allocations went to women-led organizations in 2024.

100. Since the report issued in 2024, the urgency of the need for dedicated funding for women-led organizations has become magnified, as women's organizations in conflict and crisis settings are at serious risk of collapse. About 69 per cent of civil society organizations supported by the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund highlighted in 2024 that if their external funding ended immediately, they would not

be able to sustain themselves for more than six months.⁹⁴ In 2024, the Fund raised \$65.9 million for local women's organizations and activists on the front lines, the highest annual amount mobilized since the Fund's inception. Since its establishment in 2016, the Fund has supported over 1,600 local women's organizations across 49 crisis-affected countries. In addition, as of August 2025, the Fund had mobilized \$123 million in new financing for local women's organizations through its Invest-In-Women global campaign.⁹⁵ The campaign will run until the end of 2025.

V. Work of the Security Council

101. In 2024, over 60 per cent of the decisions adopted by the Security Council included gender-related language, a slight increase compared with the previous year, and almost 50 percentage points higher than in 2000. The same year also recorded increases in both the number of women from civil society who briefed the Security Council and the percentage of all women invited under rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council, and in the percentage of women who are members of panels or groups of experts assisting the sanctions committees, the number of meetings that paid special attention to the situation of women and girls, and the number of joint statements issued by the signatories of the shared commitments on women and peace and security, an initiative that has been joined by 22 Council members since 2022. UN-Women continued its annual survey to collect information about reprisals against women civil society briefers. In 2024, 25 of the 55 women from civil society invited to brief the Security Council that year responded to the survey, 7 of whom reported having been subjected to reprisals, from smear campaigns and cyberattacks to raids on their offices. That proportion is similar to the findings of the same survey in 2023 and 2022.

102. Some of these numbers show a clear evolution in trends compared only a few years ago. In 2024, there was gender parity among the 464 people invited to brief the Security Council under rule 39. The representation of women in panels of experts relating to sanctions committees has more than doubled since 2016 and is now also approaching parity. Over the past decade, 338 women from civil society have briefed the Security Council. Between 2000 and 2014, only 17 did. However, in the first half of 2025, there was a noticeable decline in the number of women from civil society invited to brief the Security Council.

103. The increased availability of analysis and advocacy on women and peace and security has informed important decisions. The Security Council managed to strengthen the language on women and peace and security in the resolutions extending the mandates of United Nations missions in Abyei, the Central African Republic, Cyprus, Libya and South Sudan. The Security Council also clarified that acts involving sexual and gender-based violence may be grounds for designation in the sanctions list maintained by the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities. For the majority of individuals sanctioned since December 2023, particularly from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti and the Sudan, sexual violence was mentioned as a reason for their listing. Among other matters, the Security Council called for survivors of sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict situations to be given unhindered and timely access to sexual and reproductive healthcare, without any discrimination, and for the women who are family members of missing persons

⁹⁴ See wphfund.org/wphf-global-cso-survey-findings-on-women-peace-and-security-and-humanitarian-action/.

⁹⁵ See wphfund.org/investinwomen/.

to have access to custody of children, property and land rights, which is of particular relevance in the Syrian Arab Republic at the time of writing. In several cases, the Security Council echoed recommendations of the Informal Expert Group on Women and Peace and Security, which was chaired by Sierra Leone and Switzerland in 2024.

104. Some of the above-mentioned decisions have not been implemented, however. The Security Council has encouraged the coordinated engagement of the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sudan with the African Union, the League of Arab States and other regional actors in order to include women's participation in efforts to advance peace and an inclusive and comprehensive political process. However, due to the continued reluctance of the warring parties to engage in good faith efforts to end the conflict, efforts to mobilize women often remain limited to meetings on the margins, while the war goes on. Several Security Council resolutions on Afghanistan have clearly called for the Taliban to reverse the restrictions it has imposed on women, to no effect. The Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution [1988 \(2011\)](#) approved 25 travel ban exemptions for sanctioned Taliban leaders in 2024, compared with 16 in 2023 and 5 in 2022.

VI. Conclusions and recommendations

105. Women and peace and security has been on the agenda of the multilateral system for a quarter of a century. Anniversaries are typically propitious occasions to take stock and renew commitments, but this one is of special significance due to increasing conflicts and their impact on millions of women and girls. In September 2024, the General Assembly adopted the Pact for the Future, recommitting signatories to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls. It was an important sign of the strength of this policy agenda, but the ambitious commitments are often followed by weak implementation and chronic underfunding. The twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) and the thirtieth anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action are bringing additional attention and expectations, unfolding against a backdrop of global headlines that highlight regression in our pursuit of global goals on gender equality and women and peace and security. These anniversaries cannot be merely symbolic; they must be turning points. The international community must match rhetoric with action – putting prevention, conflict resolution, diplomacy and inclusive multilateralism at the heart of responses to present crises. The next five years must deliver measurable results: more conflicts ended through inclusive political solutions; more women directly shaping peace agreements, security sector reforms and recovery plans; and more survivors of violence gaining access to justice, reparations and protection. Achieving those results requires political will backed by resources, earmarked funding, quotas, targets, incentives, mandatory requirements and accountability.

106. Outlined below are key actions that I call upon Member States to announce in the context of these anniversaries and which would significantly accelerate the pace of implementation across this policy agenda, bringing new life and hope for women and peace and security advocates everywhere:

(a) **Funding.** Meet the minimum targets for funding recommended by the United Nations and use the multiple global conferences and Security Council meetings on women and peace and security to report compliance, including with respect to the minimum targets for funding for gender equality and women's participation: 1 per cent of official development assistance channelled to women's organizations in conflict-affected countries and 15 per cent to gender equality as a principal objective; a minimum of one third of participants in peace processes; and parity in broader peace and security and political processes;

(b) **Participation.** Require targets and quotas for women's full, equal, meaningful and safe participation in all mechanisms that receive Member State funding or benefit from their involvement, from peace negotiations and national dialogues to security sector reform, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, refugee camp committees, or transitional justice and accountability bodies, and require timely reporting on such participation;

(c) **Accountability.** Hold accountable those responsible for all acts of gender-based violence, including conflict-related sexual violence, reproductive violence and gender-based persecution, whether through national or international courts, including by making use of the principle of universal jurisdiction consistent with international law;

(d) **Protection.** Enforce a zero-tolerance approach to any targeted violence against women peacebuilders and human rights defenders and other women in public life;

(e) **Sanctions.** Use specific and targeted sanctions on perpetrators of gross violations of women's rights and condition the lifting of these sanctions on demonstrable and verifiable efforts to prevent or respond to violations of women's rights;

(f) **Institutionalization.** Anchor action plans on women and peace and security into national law, and ensure that these plans are fully funded and regularly monitored;

(g) **Economic and property rights.** Put into effect changes in employment policies, social protection systems, access to land, housing, inheritance and property rights, reconstruction plans and post-conflict financing that transform women's economic security;

(h) **Support to women's organizations.** Make changes to institutional practices and risk thresholds in donor policies to allow diverse local women's organizations in conflict settings and forced displacement contexts to gain access to quality, direct, flexible and consistent funding more easily, including those working on more sensitive and contested issues, such as sexual and reproductive rights and sexual orientation and gender identity.

107. In 2020, I articulated five goals for women and peace and security in the decade to 2030 (S/2020/946, para. 113). My annual reports since then have set recommendations for each of these goals. A gender data revolution that closes key information gaps and reaches the public in real time is the last of these goals. The following are recommendations for different stakeholders in this area:

(a) **Invest in data collaboration and partnerships and ensure sustainable financing for gender data production and use in crisis settings.** Member States and donors are encouraged to invest in long-term, flexible funding to strengthen gender data systems, build institutional and local capacity – including of women's organizations – and support innovation and the use of non-traditional sources, such as citizen data and big data. Greater collaboration between national statistical offices, peace and humanitarian actors, civil society and research institutions is essential for generating timely and context-specific gender data;

(b) **Institutionalize gender analysis in humanitarian and crisis response, peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction and recovery across the United Nations system.** This shift requires dedicated technical capacity, standardized toolkits and earmarked resources – particularly within United Nations country teams, investigative mechanisms, humanitarian country teams and United Nations entities with presences in conflict and crisis settings. The capacity to monitor and safely report on conflict-related sexual violence and other gender-based violations must be protected and expanded, and robust data and gender analysis on women's

participation or exclusion from decision-making, as well as with respect to the justice and security sectors, should be regularly used, including in the Security Council and other forums and channels;

(c) **Harness technology responsibly to advance gender data innovation.**

The evolving digital landscape presents new challenges, but also opportunities for generating real-time gender data, especially in fragile and hard-to-reach contexts. To unlock this potential, inclusive and secure digital tools must be developed in partnership with the technology, telecommunications and data sectors, and must be guided by strong ethical and governance standards so as to protect personal data, counter misinformation and ensure digital access and online and physical safety for women and marginalized groups, including by providing funding for necessary security measures;

(d) **Improve disaggregation of data across all aspects of the women and peace and security agenda.** Data should be systematically disaggregated by gender, disability, age and other relevant factors. Such practices are critical for understanding the specific experiences of women from marginalized groups in conflict-affected contexts, informing inclusive policies and approaches and ensuring that no one is left behind in peacebuilding, protection, humanitarian and recovery efforts.

108. The core principles of the women and peace and security agenda remain urgent and true, but their implementation must keep adapting to meet the challenges of the moment. In the coming years, it will be crucial that Member States can measure their support for this agenda in the number of women that participate directly in peace and security processes or receive relief in the form of justice, reparations, services or asylum. The international community has focused on transnational security and international legal institutions over the past 25 years, but not enough on building social movements and fostering social norm change. Women and peace and security has been highly visible in global capitals and even in the main cities in conflict-affected countries, but information, funds, policy implementation and services do not typically reach the remote areas where the greatest challenges are experienced. The future success of the agenda will depend on its ability to reach new audiences across generations and find in young people a chance for renewal and perseverance.

109. In the face of unfavourable odds and life-threatening conditions, women peacebuilders remain at the front lines of all these crises. Their universal message to governments and armed actors is unequivocal: end the wars, respect international law and disarm. These demands are at the heart of the Charter of the United Nations and are the reason why this Organization exists. The alternative is a breakdown of the international order that humanity cannot afford. The United Nations will continue to stand by the principles that inspire the women and peace and security agenda and those that underpin our mission and our Charter.