

Civil society online consultation for the commemoration of the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration for Action

DRAFT AGENDA

(as of 17.05.2024)

Date: 30 May 2024, Thursday

Time: 10.00 a.m. Brussels time/ 11pm Istanbul time/ 4pm Central Asia time (3 hours)

Format: online consultation

Connection arrangements: Zoom meeting

Language: English with simultaneous interpretation

Background

In 2025, the global community will mark the thirtieth anniversary of the [Fourth World Conference on Women and the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action](#) (1995), and 10 years of the [2030 Agenda](#) and [the Sustainable Development Goals](#). This milestone prompts a critical review of state actions and compliance with the platform's objectives, a process commencing in 2023 and culminating in a global assessment at the [69th session of the Commission on the Status of Women](#) in 2025. The Beijing+30 review process will involve stakeholders from the government, the private sector, civil society organizations (CSOs) and youth, facilitating dialogue and collaboration to elevate local realities onto the global stage.

The UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and UN Women Europe and Central Asia Regional Office (ECARO) will jointly organize the Regional Review Meeting on the 30-year review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in the UNECE region and its alignment with the 2030 Agenda in Geneva on 21-22 October 2024.

Furthermore, in the lead-up to the Regional Review Meeting, UN Women ECARO will organize a series of consultations with a broad range of stakeholders, including civil society and young people, to prepare for and inform the Beijing+30 review process with key milestones.

Facilitators: Xenia Udod and Aslihan Tekin

Time (GMT +3)	Session content
10:00 – 10:10 (10 min)	Opening remarks and Welcome by the Steering Committee
10:10 – 10:15 (5 min)	Welcoming remarks by UN Women

Part 1: Accelerating the Beijing Platform for Action and holistic overview in ECA region	
10:15 – 10:25 (10 min)	<p><i>This session aims to contextualise the 30th anniversary in regional efforts to achieve gender equality in ECA region. After sharing their level of understanding/knowledge on the BPfA, participants will learn more about the content of the BPfA, the review process from national to global levels and its significance to the region.</i></p> <p><i>Speaker: tbc (10 min)</i></p>
10:25 - 10:30	Introducing the Questionnaire - to be filled after the session
10:30 – 11:00 (30 min)	<p>Group discussion (30 minutes)</p> <p><i>In this session, participants will have the opportunity of sharing the progress, gaps, challenges and opportunities linked to the implementation of the BPfA and its 12 critical areas.</i></p> <p><i>Guiding questions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>What do you identify as gaps & challenges in the 12 critical areas of the Beijing Platform for Action?</i> - <i>What do you identify as good practice in the advancement of gender equality in ECA?</i> - <i>What are the emerging issues in our region in relation to gender equality and women's empowerment? (On Zoom poll or Mentimeter)</i>
Part 2: Clustered Area – Inclusive Development, Shared Prosperity and Decent Work	
11:00 - 11:05	<p><i>This session aims to contextualize the challenges and recommendations related to inclusive development, shared prosperity, and decent work in the context of the BPfA+25 in the ECA region.</i></p> <p><i>Speaker (tbc) (5 min)</i></p>
11:05 – 11:25 (20 min)	<p>Break out groups informed followed by guided discussion (20 minutes) – 5 breakout groups</p> <p><i>Guiding Questions A:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>What are the main challenges since B+25?</i> - <i>What do you think member states are doing on BPfA implementation, is it transparent, accountable and inclusive?</i> - <i>What are your recommendations for overcoming these challenges in our region?</i>
11:25 - 11:45	Report back to plenary (3 min per group)
11:45 - 12:00	BREAK

Part 3: Clustered Area – Poverty eradication, social protection, and social services	
12:00 - 12:05	<i>This session aims to contextualize the challenges and recommendations related to poverty eradication, social protection, and social services in the context of (BPfA+25) in the ECA region. Speaker (tbc) (5 min)</i>
12:05 – 12:25	<p>Break out groups informed followed by guided discussion (20 minutes) – 5 breakout groups</p> <p><i>Guiding Questions B:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the main challenges since B+25? - What do you think member states are doing on BPfA implementation, is it transparent, accountable and inclusive? - What are your recommendations for overcoming these challenges in our region?
12:25 - 12:45	Report back to plenary (3 min per group)
12:45	Wrap up and Next Steps by meeting facilitators. Closing remarks

Annex I BEIJING DECLARATION:

1. #26. Promote women's economic independence, including employment, and eradicate the persistent and increasing burden of poverty on women by addressing the structural causes of poverty through changes in economic structures, ensuring equal access for all women, including those in rural areas, as vital development agents, to productive resources, opportunities and public services

Chapter II GLOBAL FRAMEWORK

2. #20. Macro and micro-economic policies and programmes, including structural adjustment, have not always been designed to take account of their impact on women and girl children, especially those living in poverty. Poverty has increased in both absolute and relative terms, and the number of women living in poverty has increased in most regions. There are many urban women living in poverty; however, the plight of women living in rural and remote areas deserves special attention given the stagnation of development in such areas. In developing countries, even those in which national indicators have shown improvement, the majority of rural women continue to live in conditions of economic underdevelopment and social marginalisation.
3. #22. One fourth of all households world wide are headed by women and many other households are dependent on female income even where men are present. Female maintained households are very often among the poorest because of wage discrimination, occupational segregation patterns in the labour market and other gender-based barriers. Family disintegration, population movements between urban and rural areas within countries, international migration, war and internal displacements are factors contributing to the rise of female-headed households.
4. #36. The continuing environmental degradation that affects all human lives has often a more direct impact on women. Women's health and their livelihood are threatened by pollution and toxic wastes, large-scale deforestation, desertification, drought and depletion of the soil and of coastal and marine resources, with a rising incidence of environmentally related health problems and even death reported among women and girls. Those most affected are rural and indigenous women, whose livelihood and daily subsistence depends directly on sustainable ecosystems.
5. #46. The Platform for Action recognizes that women face barriers to full equality and advancement because of such factors as their race, age, language, ethnicity, culture, religion or disability, because they are indigenous women or because of other status. Many women encounter specific obstacles related to their family status, particularly as single parents; and to their socio-economic status, including their living conditions in rural, isolated or impoverished areas. Additional barriers also exist for refugee women, other displaced women, including internally displaced women as well as for immigrant women and migrant women, including women migrant workers. Many women are also particularly affected by environmental disasters, serious and infectious diseases and various forms of violence against women.

Chapter II GLOBAL FRAMEWORK, Women and poverty

6. #50. While poverty affects households as a whole, because of the gender division of labour and responsibilities for household welfare, women bear a disproportionate burden, attempting to manage household consumption and production under conditions of increasing scarcity. Poverty is particularly acute for women living in rural households.

Chapter II GLOBAL FRAMEWORK

Strategic objective A.1.

Review, adopt and maintain macroeconomic policies and development strategies that address the needs and efforts of women in poverty. Actions to be taken 58.

By Governments:

7. (n) Formulate and implement policies and programmes that enhance the access of women agricultural and fisheries producers (including subsistence farmers and producers, especially in rural areas) to financial, technical, extension and marketing services; provide access to and control of land, appropriate infrastructure and technology in order to increase women's incomes and promote household food security, especially in rural areas and, where appropriate, encourage the development of producer-owned, market-based cooperatives;

By national and international non-governmental organizations and women's groups:

8. (a) Mobilize all parties involved in the development process, including academic institutions, non-governmental organizations and grass-roots and women's groups, to improve the effectiveness of anti-poverty programmes directed towards the poorest and most disadvantaged groups of women, such as rural and indigenous women, female heads of household, young women and older women, refugees and migrant women and women with disabilities, recognizing that social development is primarily the responsibility of Governments
9. (d) In cooperation with the government and private sectors, participate in the development of a comprehensive national strategy for improving health, education and social services so that girls and women of all ages living in poverty have full access to such services; seek funding to secure access to services with a gender perspective and to extend those services in order to reach the rural and remote areas that are not covered by government institutions

Strategic objective A.3. Provide women with access to savings and credit mechanisms and institutions

10. (a) Enhance the access of disadvantaged women, including women entrepreneurs, in rural, remote and urban areas to financial services through strengthening links between the formal banks and intermediary lending organizations, including legislative support, training for women and institutional strengthening for intermediary institutions with a view to mobilizing capital for those institutions and increasing the availability of credit
11. (b) Encourage links between financial institutions and non-governmental organizations and support innovative lending practices, including those that integrate credit with women's services and training and provide credit facilities to rural women.

Strategic objective B.2. Eradicate illiteracy among women Actions to be taken 81. By Governments, national, regional and international bodies, bilateral and multilateral donors and non-governmental organizations:

12. (a) Reduce the female illiteracy rate to at least half its 1990 level, with emphasis on rural women, migrant, refugee and internally displaced women and women with disabilities

Strategic objective B.4. Develop non-discriminatory education and training Actions to be taken 83. By Governments, educational authorities and other educational and academic institutions:

Promote education, training and relevant information programmes for rural and farming women through the use of affordable and appropriate technologies and the mass media- for example, radio programmes, cassettes and mobile units;

13. (r) Provide non-formal education, especially for rural women, in order to realize their potential with regard to health, micro-enterprise, agriculture and legal rights

C. Women and health

14. 92. Women's right to the enjoyment of the highest standard of health must be secured throughout the whole life cycle in equality with men. Women are affected by many of the same health conditions as men, but women experience them differently. The prevalence among women of poverty and economic dependence, their experience of violence, negative attitudes towards women and girls, racial and other forms of discrimination, the limited power many women have over their sexual and reproductive lives and lack of influence in decision-making are social realities which have an adverse impact on their

health. Lack of food and inequitable distribution of food for girls and women in the household, inadequate access to safe water, sanitation facilities and fuel supplies, particularly in rural and poor urban areas, and deficient housing conditions, all overburden women and their families and have a negative effect on their health. Good health is essential to leading a productive and fulfilling life, and the right of all women to control all aspects of their health, in particular their own fertility, is basic to their empowerment.

15. 102. Women, like men, particularly in rural areas and poor urban areas, are increasingly exposed to environmental health hazards owing to environmental catastrophes and degradation. Women have a different susceptibility to various environmental hazards, contaminants and substances and they suffer different consequences from exposure to them.

Strategic objective C.1. Increase women's access throughout the life cycle to appropriate, affordable and quality health care, information and related services

Actions to be taken

16. 106. By Governments, in collaboration with non-governmental organizations and employers' and workers' organizations and with the support of international institutions:

(c) Design and implement, in cooperation with women and community-based organizations, gender-sensitive health programmes, including decentralized health services, that address the needs of women throughout their lives and take into account their multiple roles and responsibilities, the demands on their time, the special needs of rural women and women with disabilities and the diversity of women's needs arising from age and socio-economic and cultural differences, among others; include women, especially local and indigenous women, in the identification and planning of health-care priorities and programmes; remove all barriers to women's health services and provide a broad range of health-care services;

Strategic objective C.5. Increase resources and monitor follow-up for women's health Actions to be taken

110. By Governments at all levels and, where appropriate, in cooperation with non-governmental organizations, especially women's and youth organizations:

17. (a) Increase budgetary allocations for primary health care and social services, with adequate support for secondary and tertiary levels, and give special attention to the reproductive and sexual health of girls and women and give priority to health programmes in rural and poor urban areas

Strategic objective C.5. Increase resources and monitor follow-up for women's health Actions to be taken 110. By Governments at all levels and, where appropriate, in cooperation with non-governmental organizations, especially women's and youth organizations:

18. 116. Some groups of women, such as women belonging to minority groups, indigenous women, refugee women, women migrants, including women migrant workers, women in poverty living in rural or remote communities, destitute women, women in institutions or in detention, female children, women with disabilities, elderly women, displaced women, repatriated women, women living in poverty and women in situations of armed conflict, foreign occupation, wars of aggression, civil wars, terrorism, including hostage-taking, are also particularly vulnerable to violence.

E. Women and armed conflict

19. 138. Many women's non-governmental organizations have called for reductions in military expenditures world wide, as well as in international trade and trafficking in and the proliferation of weapons. Those affected most negatively by conflict and excessive military spending are people living in poverty, who are deprived because of the lack of investment in basic services. Women living in poverty, particularly rural women, also suffer because of the use of arms that are particularly injurious or have indiscriminate effects. There are more than 100 million anti-personnel land-mines scattered in 64 countries globally. The negative impact on development of excessive military expenditures, the arms trade, and investment for arms production and acquisition must be

addressed. At the same time, maintenance of national security and peace is an important factor for economic growth and development and the empowerment of women.

F. Women and the economy

20. 158. These trends have been characterized by low wages, little or no labour standards protection, poor working conditions, particularly with regard to women's occupational health and safety, low skill levels, and a lack of job security and social security, in both the formal and informal sectors. Women's unemployment is a serious and increasing problem in many countries and sectors. Young workers in the informal and rural sectors and migrant female workers remain the least protected by labour and immigration laws. Women, particularly those who are heads of households with young children, are limited in their employment opportunities for reasons that include inflexible working conditions and inadequate sharing, by men and by society, of family responsibilities.

Strategic objective F.2. Facilitate women's equal access to resources, employment, markets and trade

Actions to be taken

21. 166. By Governments:

(c) Enhance, at the national and local levels, rural women's incomegenerating potential by facilitating their equal access to and control over productive resources, land, credit, capital, property rights, development programmes and cooperative structures

22. (d) Promote and strengthen micro-enterprises, new small businesses, cooperative enterprises, expanded markets and other employment opportunities and, where appropriate, facilitate the transition from the informal to the formal sector, especially in rural areas;

23. (h) Review, reformulate, if necessary, and implement policies, including business, commercial and contract law and government regulations, to ensure that they do not discriminate against micro, small and mediumscale enterprises owned by women in rural and urban areas

24. 167. By Governments, central banks and national development banks, and private banking institutions, as appropriate:

(b) Mobilize the banking sector to increase lending and refinancing through incentives and the development of intermediaries that serve the needs of women entrepreneurs and producers in both rural and urban areas, and include women in their leadership, planning and decisionmaking

25. (c) Structure services to reach rural and urban women involved in micro, small and medium-scale enterprises, with special attention to young women, low-income women, those belonging to ethnic and racial minorities, and indigenous women who lack access to capital and assets; and expand women's access to financial markets by identifying and encouraging financial supervisory and regulatory reforms that support financial institutions' direct and indirect efforts to better meet the credit and other financial needs of the micro, small and medium-scale enterprises of women

26. 169. By multilateral funders and regional development banks, as well as bilateral and private funding agencies, at the international, regional and subregional levels:

(a) Review, where necessary reformulate, and implement policies, programmes and projects, to ensure that a higher proportion of resources reach women in rural and remote areas

27. 171. By Governments and/or multilateral financial institutions: Review rules and procedures of formal national and international financial institutions that obstruct replication of the Grameen Bank prototype, which provides credit facilities to rural women.

28. 173. By Governments in cooperation with non-governmental organizations and the private sector:
- (c) Provide outreach programmes to inform low-income and poor women, particularly in rural and remote areas, of opportunities for market and technology access, and provide assistance in taking advantage of such opportunities

Strategic objective F.4. Strengthen women's economic capacity and commercial networks Actions to be taken

29. 175. By Governments:
- (a) Adopt policies that support business organizations, non-governmental organizations, cooperatives, revolving loan funds, credit unions, grass-roots organizations, women's self-help groups and other groups in order to provide services to women entrepreneurs in rural and urban areas
30. 176. By financial intermediaries, national training institutes, credit unions, non-governmental organizations, women's associations, professional organizations and the private sector, as appropriate:
- (d) Strengthen the participation of women, including marginalized women, in production and marketing cooperatives by providing marketing and financial support, especially in rural and remote areas
 - (e) Promote and strengthen women's micro-enterprises, new small businesses, cooperative enterprises, expanded markets and other employment opportunities and, where appropriate, facilitate the transition from the informal to the formal sector, in rural and urban areas

Strategic objective F.5. Eliminate occupational segregation and all forms of employment discrimination Actions to be taken

32. 178. By Governments, employers, employees, trade unions and women's organizations:
- (e) Develop and promote employment programmes and services for women entering and/or re-entering the labour market, especially poor urban, rural and young women, the self-employed and those negatively affected by structural adjustment

K. Women and the environment

33. 247. All States and all people shall cooperate in the essential task of eradicating poverty as an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, in order to decrease the disparities in standards of living and better meet the needs of the majority of the people of the world. Hurricanes, typhoons and other natural disasters and, in addition, the destruction of resources, violence, displacements and other effects associated with war, armed and other conflicts, the use and testing of nuclear weaponry, and foreign occupation can also contribute to environmental degradation. The deterioration of natural resources displaces communities, especially women, from income-generating activities while greatly adding to unremunerated work. In both urban and rural areas, environmental degradation results in negative effects on the health, well-being and quality of life of the population at large, especially girls and women of all ages. Particular attention and recognition should be given to the role and special situation of women living in rural areas and those working in the agricultural sector, where access to training, land, natural and productive resources, credit, development programmes and cooperative structures can help them increase their participation in sustainable development. Environmental risks in the home and workplace may have a disproportionate impact on women's health because of women's different susceptibilities to the toxic effects of various chemicals. These risks to women's health are particularly high in urban areas, as well as in low-income areas where there is a high concentration of polluting industrial facilities.

Strategic objective K.1. Involve women actively in environmental decision-making at all levels Actions to be taken

34. 253. By Governments, at all levels, including municipal authorities, as appropriate:
- (e) Take measures to integrate a gender perspective in the design and implementation of, among other things, environmentally sound and sustainable resource management mechanisms, production techniques and infrastructure development in rural and urban areas

Strategic objective K.2. Integrate gender concerns and perspectives in policies and programmes for sustainable development Actions to be taken 256. By Governments:

35. (d) Integrate rural women's traditional knowledge and practices of sustainable resource use and management in the development of environmental management and extension programmes
36. (f) Promote knowledge of and sponsor research on the role of women, particularly rural and indigenous women, in food gathering and production, soil conservation, irrigation, watershed management, sanitation, coastal zone and marine resource management, integrated pest management, land-use planning, forest conservation and community forestry, fisheries, natural disaster prevention, and new and renewable sources of energy, focusing particularly on indigenous women's knowledge and experience

Strategic objective K.3. Strengthen or establish mechanisms at the national, regional and international levels to assess the impact of development and environmental policies on women Actions to be taken

37. 258. By Governments, regional and international organizations and non-governmental organizations, as appropriate:
 - (b) Develop gender-sensitive databases, information and monitoring systems and participatory action-oriented research, methodologies and policy analyses, with the collaboration of academic institutions and local women researchers, on the following
38. (v) Programmes to create rural and urban training, research and resource centres that will disseminate environmentally sound technologies to women