

Proposal for a Strengthened UN Entity for Women and Girls:

Enhancing Collaboration, Accountability, and Visibility

Executive Summary

In response to the ongoing discussions on structural reforms and merger proposals, we propose the strengthening of a robust, standalone UN entity dedicated to promoting the rights and empowerment of women and girls. It is vital to strengthen the independent voice of women, increase visibility, and consolidate expertise.

There is a strong concern that moves towards change are taking place without sufficient evidence-based evaluation and data and are taking place at too fast a rate without sufficient consultation time with all stakeholders.

There is a strong concern regarding why Member States and other stakeholders perceive the current structures to be unfit for purpose moving forwards and therefore the need for change. MS need to be asked - what would they pay for.

There is a strong concern that most structures today are based on masculine thinking and there is a need for the feminist perspective to be used when evaluating and developing any new structures.

The proposal here is for UN Women to build upon the existing strengths of UN Women, while incorporating key learnings from the proposed mergers and UNFPA's expertise in reproductive health and the input from stakeholders especially civil society.

Preserve Independence:

Maintaining a standalone structure will ensure continued focus on women's rights, empowerment, and gender equality.

Enhance Collaboration:

Foster stronger strategic partnerships with UNFPA, WHO, and other relevant agencies to leverage expertise, resources, and networks.

Develop civil society interaction across the diversity of organisations working with women and girls without bias.

Develop a robust reflection mechanism to learn from feedback and action in the field.

Strengthen Reproductive Health:

Integrate UNFPA's reproductive health expertise to provide comprehensive support for women's and girls' health, including family planning, maternal health, and SRHR.

Amplify Visibility and Accountability:

Strengthen the entity's global profile, ensuring greater visibility, recognition, and representation on all UN platforms.

Drive Cohesive Action:

Encourage a unified, system-wide approach to address all aspects of women's lives from the cradle to the grave.

Programme integration:

Integrate the work of UNDP and other UN entities that provide services for women and girls including GBV, in order to stop proliferation of programmes for women and girls undertaken by other UN entities so that all work for women and girls across the UN will take place under the co-ordination of UN Women.

Strengthen offices and departments for women and girls in all UN entities in order that programmes and processes in every UN entity take into consideration the perspectives and consequences of their work on women and girls.

Strengthen the specific expertise of each UN entity in regard to women and girls and ensure that decision makers at the highest level are fully aware of the impact on women and girls of their agencies' work and ensure that all policies and programmes ensure rights of women and girls.

Key Components

Council of Experts:

Establish a council comprising representatives from UN Women, UNFPA, WHO, and other relevant agencies to ensure strategic guidance, coordination, and collaboration, including strong representation of civil society.

Joint Programmes and Initiatives:

Strengthen, develop and implement joint programmes and initiatives that leverage the strengths of each entity, focusing on key areas highlighted by UN Women.

Shared Resources and Infrastructure:

Implement a resource-sharing framework to optimize utilization of assets, expertise, and networks, promoting efficiency and reducing duplication.

Enhanced Monitoring and Evaluation:

Develop a robust monitoring and evaluation framework to assess progress, identify areas for improvement, and inform strategic decision-making.

Strengthened Communication and Advocacy:

Establish a unified communications strategy to amplify the voices of women and girls, promote awareness of UN Women's work, and advocate for policy changes that advance gender equality across all UN processes.

Funding

Funding Effectiveness:

There are current concerns about how funds are utilized and whether they effectively support women and girls globally. There is a call to ensure funding priorities align with women's rights and gender equality outcomes.

Objectives

Streamline Funding:

Develop a centralized framework for managing funding allocations, reducing administrative costs, and improving the efficiency of international and national aid efforts.

Encourage Collaboration:

Strengthen partnerships between governments, NGOs, private sector organizations, and local communities to maximize the impact of funding efforts. Use a system of bucket funding with criteria including building on earlier funded processes and full consultation and inclusion of civil society.

Key Strategies

Payment Compliance and Secure funding streams:

Ensuring MS pay their subscriptions to the UN.

Sanctions for those that do not pay ie inability to vote until payments are received and banked.

Ensure information of the long term deficit to the UN is well known (not just a recent situation)

Private Sector Engagement:

There is a recognized need to expand funding sources beyond member states.

Engage corporations for support, ensuring partnerships are in line with values of UN Women.

Reduce costs

Through shared administrative costs

Through strategic partnerships with civil society organisations.

Mechanisms for Allocation:

Establish a transparent and meritocratic system for allocating funds to projects, ensuring that resources are directed towards initiatives with the greatest potential for positive impact.

Data-Driven Decision Making:

Utilize advanced data analytics tools to track progress, identify areas for improvement, and inform evidence-based decision making.

Capacity Building:

Provide training and capacity-building programs for local stakeholders, empowering them to take ownership of funding initiatives and drive meaningful change.

Impact Evaluation:

Regularly assess and evaluate the effectiveness of funding efforts, making adjustments as needed to optimize outcomes, ensuring that capacity building at the local level is one of the criteria for success.

Purpose of funding:

Ensure that the majority of funding is used for the advancement of women and girls rather than administration.

Use civil society expertise in the field.

Implementation

Establish a Centralized Framework:

Develop and implement a comprehensive framework for managing funding allocations, including a defined structure, processes, and metrics for evaluation.

Engage Stakeholders:

Strengthen existing partnerships with governments, NGOs, private sector organizations, and local communities to ensure a collaborative approach to funding initiatives. Ensuring that civil society organisations have an equal place at the table.

Develop a Data Analytics Platform:

Create a data analytics platform to track progress, identify areas for improvement, and inform evidence-based decision making.

Launch Capacity Building Programs:

Provide training and capacity-building programs for local stakeholders to empower them to take ownership of funding initiatives.

Recommendations

1. Consider more centralised funding allocation based on global need rather than political priorities.
 1. Structures could include replicating countries fund allocated directly to causes that relate to their impact on the world.
 2. Ultimately, newer and stronger funding structures that provide a fair allocation of cost, to unify the aim of the United Nations to work for the betterment of the world, and not for individual countries interests.
2. Implement the use of traditional forms of fundraising strategies, such as engaging with corporate partnerships, major donors, and funds & grants. With a strong structure in place, stipulating mitigation of coercive influence from donation.
3. Strengthen accountability and safeguarding of programmes that UN Women have implemented that provide a unique contribution to the United Nations and the worlds insights.
 1. Some core principles are UN Women helping governments on the development laws, shape policies, and monitor progress. The UN Women's structures allow the dynamics towards the UN to be their principal gender policy adviser, such as the advocacy of CEDAW implementation, Beijing Platform for Action, Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), and monitoring SDGs.

2. UN Women also holds all other UN agencies to account on gender equality, in the UN system-wide coordination, such as on programmes like UN-Swap, gender mainstreaming, and coordination across Resident Coordinators.
3. UN Women hold the largest and strongest Civil Society relationships with governments regarding gender. The use of civil society in CSW acts as a normative role supporting and guiding the implementation of international gender commitments.
4. Another core UN Women attribute is their focus on women's economics, including Gender-responsive budgeting (GRB), feminist economics, and care economics. Their research has a wide variety of areas including Gender-sensitive measurement, as well as data gaps, creating and establishing gender sensitive methodologies that innovate and help bring in stronger datasets. UN Women cover the nuanced of gendered implications in a wide variety of areas that help build the empowerment and structures to create forms of equality. UN Women cover these topics:
4. Ensure these unique attributes and characteristics of UN Women are protected, with strong protections in place and acknowledged if UN Women hold other agencies to account. Ensuring Civil Society still holds a strong position of as a voice of society, with influence for the need on the ground.
5. Clearly divide responsibilities between agencies to eliminate duplication. Introduce shared back-office services, similar to models used by many smaller NGOs.