

BEIJING+25 AND TRAINING FOR GENDER EQUALITY

VIRTUAL DIALOGUE REPORT

The UN Women Training Centre’s 15th Community of Practice (CoP) Virtual Dialogue shed light on how training for gender equality can support us to achieve the aims of the Beijing Platform for Action, 25 years on.

Held in December 2019, the 15th Virtual Dialogue hosted by the UN Women Training Centre’s Community of Practice was a space for participatory discussion on Beijing+25 and training for gender equality. Through an interactive webinar with four expert panellists and an online discussion forum, the Virtual Dialogue explored why training for gender equality matters more than ever as we mark 25 years since the Beijing Platform for Action, and how we can use training for gender equality to elicit the change needed to address the unfinished business of Beijing.



4 WEBINAR PANELLISTS



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Objectives of the 15th Virtual Dialogue

To discuss:

WHY

Why is training for gender equality well-placed to support the Beijing Platform for Action?

HOW

How can training for gender equality support our efforts to achieve the promise of Beijing?

WHAT

What practical examples exist of using training for gender equality to advance the change at the heart of the Beijing Platform for Action?

What are Virtual Dialogues?

Virtual Dialogues are online discussions on topics related to training for gender equality that form part of the UN Women Training Centre’s [Community of Practice \(CoP\)](#).

Virtual Dialogues are inclusive processes of learning, sharing and collective knowledge production that aim to improve the quality and impact of training for gender equality worldwide.

BACKGROUND

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (PFA) is the most visionary agenda for the empowerment of women and girls, everywhere. 2020 marks 25 years since the Beijing Platform for Action set out how to remove the systemic barriers that hold women back from equal participation in all areas of life.

The PFA's adoption in 1995 by 189 governments committed them to strategic, bold action in 12 critical areas of concern: poverty, education and training, health, violence, armed conflict, economy, power and decision-making, institutional mechanisms, human rights, media, environment, and the girl child. 25 years on, although have made progress, change has been agonizingly slow. Today, not a single country can claim to have achieved gender equality. Around the world, women remain undervalued, they continue to work more, earn less, have fewer choices, less control over resources, and experience multiple forms of violence.

UN Women has launched a new multigenerational campaign: "[Generation Equality: Realizing women's rights for an equal future](#)" to mark the 25th anniversary commemoration of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Generation equality is a rallying point to insist on

finally achieving the human rights of all women and girls and will be organized as a global mobilization. To contribute to this transformation, the Community of Practice of the UN Women Training Centre hosted its 15th Virtual Dialogue to ask how can training for gender equality help us to achieve the promise of the Beijing Platform for Action?



12 Critical Areas to Ensure Gender Equality

Women and the environment



Violence against women



The girl child



Women and the economy



Institutional mechanisms



Women and armed conflict



Human rights of women



Education and training of women



Women and poverty



Women in power and decision-making



Women and health



Women and the media



KEY MESSAGES

WHAT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED IN TRAINING FOR GENDER EQUALITY SINCE BEIJING?

Training for gender equality has proliferated in the past 25 years. Given the expertise of the Virtual Dialogue Webinar panellists, this report looks at training for gender equality in the cross-cutting area of gender statistics, and two of the Beijing Platform for Action's 12 critical areas of concern – violence against women, and women and the environment.

GENDER DATA: INCREASING CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

Official statistics on gender equality are increasingly being produced by national statistical organizations (NSOs) and other actors within national statistical systems, guided by the UN fundamental principles on official statistics. Information is meant to be collected according to scientific standards in terms of data sources, collection methods and procedures, upholding strictly professional considerations in line with internationally-agreed guidelines and good practices shared by statistical communities.

At the same time, training and capacity development on gender statistics and gender-sensitive data have progressed. Major milestones include:

- **2006:** The UN Statistical Commission endorsed a Global Gender Statistics Programme in 2006. Its primary objective it is to build the capacities of countries to collect, disseminate and use quality gender statistics. The United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) serves as the coordinator of the global Gender Statistics Programme, providing avenues to promote the greater use of common standards and tools. The programme's online platform provides a compilation of eLearning tools developed by various actors in the UN system – UN

agencies, UN Regional Commissions and the UNSD. These toolkits are designed to support National Statistical Offices (NSOs) in their efforts to increase understanding and the use of gender statistics by government officials, as well as other key players in national statistical systems. These toolkits consist of thematic modules which include short, user-friendly definitions, practical examples and hands-on exercises.

- **2007:** The Global Gender Statistics Programme's activities include a biannual Global Forum on Gender Statistics, which provides a venue for statisticians, producers and users of statistics, alongside policy-makers, to advance gender statistics through the exchange of knowledge and experiences. The next Global Forum on Gender Statistics will be held in 2021, on the margins of the World Data Forum.

- **2007:** Another sub-programme under the Global Gender Statistics Programme is the Interagency Expert Group on Gender Statistics, formed in 2007 to promote collaboration among key stakeholders and provide guidance on the global programme's direction.

• 2018/2019: UN Women developed a Global Gender Data Programme – ‘Women Count’, short for ‘Making every woman and girls count’ – implemented across the global, regional and national levels (see details in the section below). The Women Count Data Hub brings together the latest available data on gender and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as well as stories and analysis about the lived experience of women and girls. UN Women has also worked with partners to develop a framework and guidelines which adopt a comprehensive, granular and holistic approach to enhancing the capacity of national statistical systems to produce and communicate gender statistics.

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE: INNOVATIVE PROGRAMMES

A range of programmes with strong training components have been developed to address gender-based violence around the world. A notable example is the International Center for Research on Women’s (ICRW) Gender Equity Movement in Schools (GEMS) programme. In India, this school-based programme for the primary prevention of gender-based violence works with students – both boys and girls, young men and young women – and involves sustained training to build the capacities of public school teachers in order to foster gender equality, redefine masculinity and end all forms of violence.

“The GEMS programme in India works to redefine masculinity and end all forms of violence.”

– Hemlata Verma,
Webinar panellist

GENDER AND THE ENVIRONMENT: MAKING THE LINK

The global environmental crisis involves a number of issues, including water scarcity, the loss of biodiversity, climate change, climate-related disasters, energy, and land and sea degradation, among many other environmental issues. Gender inequality and the environmental crisis have been identified as two major challenges that must be addressed in order to achieve the SDGs – including in the latest SDG presented in September 2019. The link between gender and the environment is highly relevant.

For the past 25 years, national and international stakeholders working on development have addressed the linkages between gender and the environment, including governments, NGOs, UN agencies and key players such as the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

Key players have developed tools and methodologies to address gender equality across the environmental sector, including through training for gender equality. Strategic work at the international level has been paired with efforts to work on capacities from the global to the local level.

Notable training tools include guidelines and online courses, such as the open online course on gender and the environment, launched in 2018. The course addresses a range of issues related to gender and the environment through different modules. Although environmental issues tend to be reduced to discussions on climate change, this course goes beyond a narrow focus to include a range of issues related to environmental crisis.

HOW CAN TRAINING FOR GENDER EQUALITY SUPPORT OUR EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE THE PROMISE OF BEIJING?

Training for gender equality supports transformative change towards a world that respects and promotes the human rights of all people equally – women, men and people of diverse gender identities. The Beijing Platform for Action’s ultimate goal is evoking transformation towards a truly equal world. This section summarizes points raised by the Virtual Dialogue Webinar panellists on how training can be used to advance pathways for change in areas key to the PFA – gender statistics, gender-based violence, and the environment – and examining practical examples.

COLLECTING AND USING GENDER STATISTICS: UN WOMEN’S EXPERIENCE

Training for gender equality has a major role to play in building capacities to collect, analyse and use sex-disaggregated and gender statistics. The Beijing Platform for Action committed countries to generating and disseminating sex-disaggregated data and information for planning and evaluation (see paragraph 206 of the PFA). Actions were identified, to be taken by key actors – specifically by national, regional and international statistical services, alongside relevant governmental and UN agencies. These actors committed to lead the collection, compilation and analysis of gender statistics. They also committed to involving women’s organizations and research organizations on a regular basis, in addition to establishing focal points, among other actions. The UN is mandated to promote methodology development for gender statistics, as well as to assist countries in the development of gender policies and programmes (see paragraph 208 of the PFA).

UN Women’s approach centres on capacity development

UN Women prioritizes training and capacity development to enable the generation and use of gender statistics. For example,

“Our approach at UN Women is really ensuring that we strengthen capacity.”

– Jessamyn Encarnacion,
Webinar panellist

the Women Count programme fosters an enabling policy environment by developing tools to assist countries to create national strategies for the development of gender statistics. It is important for governments to assess their capacity, as well as data gaps. As such, UN Women provides trainings within countries and regions. Most recently, in November 2019, a regional training workshop took place in Africa with participants from six countries – Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Cote d’Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Malawi and Mozambique. By next year, they will each devise their own country strategy for the development of gender statistics within their national statistical systems.

Integrating long-term capacity development in statistical systems

Through the Women Count programme, dedicated training is provided on generating new and more disaggregated gender statistics, in line with the principle of leaving no one behind – the core pledge of the SDGs. In implementing the programme, UN Women not only supports a specific surveys or the production of data for specific indicators. More critically, it works to provide the whole package: supporting countries to build gender-sensitive statistical systems and making sure that capacities are developed at the individual, institutional and system-wide levels.

Thus, capacity development is fully integrated in the institutionalized, system-wide change that the programme promotes. Training does not stop with three-day training workshops. Instead, UN Women works to foster long-term processes of capacity development and training, to ensure that training is translated into concrete actions.

Addressing gaps in data use and creating enabling institutional mechanisms

The Women Count programme also involves supporting the establishment of interagency coordination mechanisms or technical working groups within countries. This enables the coordination of decentralized gender statistics systems, especially in contexts where all ministries which have their own set of gender statistics. Coordination enables statisticians to use common standards, talk with each other on what statistics are present, which are not, and which should be prioritized.

In parallel with efforts to close data gaps, the Women Count programme's training and capacity development components work to address gaps in the use of available gender statistics. As much as the programme invests in training data producers, it also ensures that the training of data users are equally recognized, addressed and implemented.

“The Women Count programme is a radical shift in how we ‘do’ gender statistics. We promote institutionalized and system-wide change, in which capacity development is fully integrated.”

– Jessamyn Encarnacion,
Webinar panellist

For example, to coordinate training efforts on gender statistics in Asia and the Pacific, a regional sub-group on gender statistics training was created, as part of a broader group/network for the coordination of statistical training. As part of its work, the sub-group is developing a training curriculum for gender statistics – the first of its kind in Asia and the Pacific.

In the development of this training curriculum, it was important to recognize that, for many years, training on gender statistics focused on statistics production. However, much more needs to be done to encourage data use for policy-making. Therefore, the training curriculum provides an equal focus on integrating a gender perspective in official statistics, utilizing gender data for policy-making, and arranging user-producer dialogue on gender data needs and priorities. This forum for dialogue is a learning experience – in a sense, it is a form of training, as the sharing of experiences builds the capacities of data producers and data users.

The curriculum includes specific modules for data users, specific modules for data producers, and specific modules that cut across both data users' and data producers' needs.

Creating resource repositories

Alongside the training curriculum, a public repository on gender statistics training materials is being developed. This will cover 13 modules of the training curriculum, containing various training materials.

Key materials include the syllabus, presentations, exercises, sample data sets that can be explored, a list of resources for further study, etc.

A public repository of gender statistics training experts is also being developed. This is in recognition of the fact that while it is less difficult to find experts on gender statistics, experts on gender statistics training are more challenging to find, as they require very particular specialized skills. Both the training materials repository and the training experts' repository are being developed in Asia and the Pacific, under the Women Count's project in the region. However, these resources are expected to be accessed and used by countries across different regions – including Africa, Latin America, the Middle East and North Africa – i.e. countries where the UN Women's Women Count programme is being implemented. Version 1.0 of these repositories will be available before the end of 2019.

“What we do in UN Women is ensure that it is not only data production that we highlight in terms of training, but also providing an environment, an enabling institutional mechanism – [such as] users-producers dialogue, which is a kind of training in itself.”

– Jessamyn Encarnacion,
Webinar panellist

“When we start, the first question is: who will lead the change? For change to be sustainable, the idea is always to institutionalize the larger processes, the pathways of change. When we talk about institutionalizing in the education system, no one other than teachers can play this role best.”

– Hemlata Verma,
Webinar panellist

TRAINING TO END GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE: THE GEMS EXPERIENCE

Identifying agents of change

In the experience of the ICRW's Gender Equity Movement in Schools (GEMS) programme, training initiatives must focus on teachers as agents of change. They are best placed to institutionalize pathways of change in the education system. When they begin participating in training on preventing gender-based violence, they require hand-holding support. As such, the programme's staff are also trained on gender equality.

Knowing and adapting to the local context

In some contexts, collective training spaces for women and men can create challenges due to conservative socio-cultural norms, such as when discussing matters related to sexuality. In GEMS' experience in India, bringing up sexuality can prompt participants to clam up and “retreat into

their own shells”. Therefore, the trainers have devised strategies for broaching sensitive subjects, informed by their understanding of the local context. Sexuality is discussed in the context of overall health during the trainings, in order to create an environment which participants do not regard as threatening.

Understanding the local context is also vital for communicating concepts clearly. For instance, in India, where Hindi is predominantly used, there is a local term for ‘sexuality’. However, when ‘gender’ is translated into the local language, the meaning changes a great deal, as does the nuance. The best way forward identified by the GEMS programme is to incorporate the word ‘gender’ in English, and help participants to learn the meaning of this word, as several English words are already used in the local language.

In fact, the term ‘gender’ is used in English at the national level in the Indian school curriculum, as well as by teachers in schools.

Securing political support

As the GEMS programme engages with public schools, it requires specific permissions from the Government to engage with public school teachers and students. First and foremost, until the Government’s support is secured, the programme cannot bring teachers together for training. However, once Government support has been secured and the state informs teachers of the programme, they are able and willing to participate.

However, ensuring the participation of both women and men requires sustained advocacy and awareness raising. For instance, schools initially had the impression that they should send women teachers, as the programme has ‘gender’ in its title – and ‘gender’ is all too often taken as a synonym for ‘women’. When the programme began implementing the programme in the western state of Rajasthan, the local programme was named ‘GEMS for Boys’, as it focuses on working with adolescent boys in schools. Because of its name, the Government instantly felt that more male teachers should attend the trainings. As a result, of the teachers who attended the training, at least 60% were men.

Creating a collective training space for both women and men

The GEMS programme training sessions for teachers bring both men and women together to create a collective space where they can challenge inequitable norms and the status quo, start to critically reflect on the issues in their own lives, and find their own voice. Similarly, training sessions on the curriculum on primary prevention of gender-based violence are delivered for girls and boys together in their classrooms. These are delivered by teachers of either gender.

This collective space is vital for bringing participants together as equals in discussions and debates, and then moving towards identifying collective ways of taking small steps toward change in their own lives, and in their own environments.

Understanding different pathways of change

It is vital that training initiatives recognize that the pathways of change are different for different participants, and different groups of participants – specifically, they are different for men and for women. To engage men, the programme has found it useful to put a ‘positive spin’ on discussions around the need to change gender norms. They explicitly link equitable gender norms to their benefits, in terms of inclusive aspirations, better relationships, good communication, sharing a happy and a friendly environment within the classroom or within the household.

“Once the Government has issued [an order] telling the teachers ‘you have to go for these trainings’ on gender equality and the primary prevention of gender-based violence in schools’, the teachers definitely do come forward.”

– Hemlata Verma,
Webinar panellist

“Having a collective space for men and women together is one way that we always move ahead in the gender training.”

– Hemlata Verma,
Webinar panellist

The GEMS programme’s trainers have found that arguments framed in this way have more resonance with male participants. By contrast, for women participants, starting with the overall understanding that violence against women and gender-based violence is wrong and we all need to speak out against it – a very simple argument – can help to set the tone.

Separate spaces for discussions of masculinities

Although collective training sessions for women and men are extremely useful, the GEMS programme’s experience indicates the need for separate spaces for discussions on masculinity. Collective discussion often makes men and boys feel cornered. In many parts of India, where predominant understandings of masculinity hold that men should not express their vulnerabilities in front of women or girls, for fear of being judged. Therefore, it is easier for them to come out with their vulnerabilities and start questioning their own stance when men are alone together. The GEMS programme finds that it is important for men to first see the inequalities and injustices that men experience due to inequitable gender norms, and then move on the discussion to the inequalities between men and women.

Creating a safe space for men and boys to express themselves encourages them to open up, to show confusion, and to start asking vital questions. This is conducive to reflection on masculinities and questioning the status quo. It prompts male participants to reflect on their vulnerabilities, power and privileges – and the implications these have, for themselves and for others. It also helps to mitigate resistances.

Starting with the concept of human rights

Another important way of mitigating resistances, and starting a meaningful discussion on change, is to use human rights as an entry point. In the GEMS

“In trainings, men and boys need separate spaces to start reflecting on the kind of pressures they face to understand the concept of masculinity – what pressures it puts on them, what vulnerabilities, powers and privileges – both in the context of the self and the relationships around them.”

– Hemlata Verma,
Webinar panellist

“If we begin the discussions with unpacking the social construct of gender, often the participants start feeling that [we are] pitting men against women. Therefore, it is easier to move forward when we bring up human rights first, and then start the discussion on gender.”

– Hemlata Verma,
Webinar panellist

programme’s experience, starting off training with a discussion of gender can make participants weary or even resistant – they may erroneously believe that the training will pit men against women. This makes it very difficult to move forward. In order to convey clearly that the training’s intention is to enable a joint learning process, a joint initiative towards positive change for all by ending gender-based violence, it is best to start with an appeal to universal human rights.

This helps to give space for everyone – both men and women, and boys and girls – to connect the issue rights violations to their own lives, in a way that they readily understand. The programme’s approach is to help each of the participants to realize that, at some point in time, each one of us has experienced gender-based discrimination, gender-based violence or basic violation of rights.

Discussing human rights at the outset dispels the risk of initial resistances caused by misunderstandings of the terms ‘gender’ and ‘gender equality’. These resistances may come from men, but equally they may come from women, many of whom may also hold sexist and gender inequitable views. Beginning by acknowledging that human rights exist for each one of us, equally, enables a form of bonding in the training that offers the space for a discussion to begin. Once this basis is established, the training can build up to addressing more difficult issues, such as sexual violence. If training starts with human rights, by the time more contentious subjects come up, a level of confidence and trust has been built with and among the participants. By this time, they will understand that the training is not pitting them against each other; rather, the training is a safe space where they can discuss gender-based violence together.

Linking training to personal experiences and forging an emotional connection

After discussing human rights, the GEMS programme’s experience highlights the importance of discussing power – and connecting the broader issue of power to participants’ personal experiences. By prefacing discussions of gender with human rights and then ‘the self’, training sessions avoid participants becoming defensive. Trainings that begin immediately with the issue of gender-based discrimination and violence can prompt finger pointing at men or boys as perpetrators of GBV, causing them to become defensive. This runs the risk of the training losing out on the larger vision of helping everyone to reflect on the root causes of gender inequality.

Instead, the GEMS programme’s trainings move from human rights to conversations on how participants have experienced power in their own lives. This fosters a space where they can share personal experiences of when they felt discriminated against, or when they could not achieve what they wanted to.

“Starting with self-reflections and then moving on to challenging gender norms is important [...] Helping people to connect the narratives of their arguments to their own lives gives a lot of space for people to reflect. Here is where the gender trainers and the people who are leading the training need to acknowledge, and give space, to the participants.”

**– Hemlata Verma,
Webinar panellist**

Thus, starting with self-reflection and the validation of participants’ personal experiences is essential in any form of training for gender equality.

Then, training can begin framing messages around the gains of gender equality and creating an emotional connection with and between participants. In this way, participants gradually begin asking, ‘what do I get out of being gender equitable?’, ‘why should men change?’ and ‘why should women change?’ Enabling trainees to connect the narratives of their arguments to their own lives offers space for reflection – space that the trainers and facilitators must ensure. Taking off from these reflections, the training can encourage participants to begin questioning certain things together, and looking at the underlying structures and processes at play. This does not mean that the training will change all of the participants instantly, but it does allow collective conversations to start – this is the first step towards change, and to achieving the vision of the Beijing Platform for Action.

Connecting gender to broader social issues and institutional policies

While training on gender-based violence must focus on violence, there is a need to link GBV to other social concerns. For instance, when discussing gender equality and violence-free learning spaces, it is important to connect these to the issue of the improved quality of education, the value of the girl child, and the prevention of child marriage, among other issues. In conflict- or crisis-affected areas, discussing the issues of human rights violations, understanding what our human rights are, and understanding that we all need spaces to reflect and express ourselves, can help participants to untangle and unpack the issue of gender-based violence.

Moreover, linking the overall issue of gender equality with larger institutional policies helps to further dialogue on gender-based violence prevention at the government level. These policies can and should include international frameworks to which governments are committed, such as the PFA. This is especially important for public sector actors – including officials, teachers and law enforcement. For example, when training law enforcement agencies, self-reflection on their own lives is best followed by discussing their role and power in terms of governance, and how they can flip it around to not just respond to gender-based violence, but also to prevent it.

Using case studies to call out violence

Case studies are a useful way of prompting discussion on gender-based violence in training scenarios. The GEMS programme presents case studies and asks participants to take a stand about whether the case involves, or does not involve, violence in the situation. Each participant is given the space to express themselves – including those who may try to justify or deny the existence of violence in the examples presented.

¹ Purdah is a religious and social practice of female seclusion among some Hindu and Muslim communities.

“In the GEMS programme, we try to connect gender equality to the larger strategies that we are talking about, including the PFA – i.e. which countries are politically committed to, or local state governments are committed to.”

– Hemlata Verma,
Webinar panellist

“When men start talking about the issue of gender equality in their personal lives, and not just as teachers to children, we see how the conversations are coming out.”

– Hemlata Verma,
Webinar panellist

Once the participants’ voice their opinions, the training can begin discussing gender-based violence in greater depth, and focus on fostering recognition and understanding.

Examples of initial discussions from the GEMS programme demonstrate how training for gender equality can begin important new conversations. For example, in Rajasthan, one male teacher began to reflect on how the use of power by men puts women and girls at more risk. This inspired him to have a candid conversation with his mother on how *ghunghat (purdah)*¹ is a manifestation of gender inequality forced upon his mother by men, to restrict her mobility. This kind of conversation on an extremely political, sensitive issue in this cultural context was a direct result of the training. It reflects how encouraging participants to connect gender issues with their own personal experiences can promote debate at the individual, family, and even the societal levels.

Similarly, once boys and girls who participate in the GEMS programme’s trainings are exposed to discussions on gender equality and the larger idea of challenging the status quo on social norms, they start asking questions, such as: why does child marriage happen? Is physical punishment violence? Why do boys rape girls? Do I share household responsibilities? These are the kind of discussions that begin between boys and girls, as well as between teachers and students, following training on preventing gender-based violence.

children on issues of gender-based violence. As the children themselves can hear their testimonies, as can the Government, this gives the data a high degree of reliability. In addition to such quantitative indicators, the GEMS programme uses qualitative indicators, such as in-depth interviews with training participants – both students and teachers – over a span of time. This helps the programme to monitor and evaluate pathways of change in terms of gender roles, rejecting gender-based violence, and improved bystander intervention.

Collecting quantitative and qualitative data

Whenever we are talking about training, both quantitative and qualitative data should be used to measure the pathways of change. For example, the GEMS programme uses self-administered interviews or audio-recorded questions to monitor and assess changes in the attitudes and behaviours of

“We need different approaches. Human rights is the basic approach. We also need to have an intersectionality approach. For environmental issues, it is very important to have the approach of territory.”

– Itza Castañeda,
Webinar panellist

“We need to develop gender-responsive actions – that is what works. Gender equality is a driver of transformation and co-benefits. In the environmental field, this issue of the benefits and co-benefits of environmental actions is important.”

– Itza Castañeda,
Webinar panellist

TRAINING ON GENDER AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Working strategically, on multiple levels

Training on gender and the environment involves strategic work at the international level, as well as working from the global to the local level. It is also important to promote gender equality beyond the mere recognition of inequalities and vulnerabilities.

Gender-responsive actions need to be developed, recognizing that gender equality is a driver of transformation and co-benefits. The issue of benefits and co-benefits is especially important in the environmental field. Equally, it is important to train different sectors and actors – from high-level international delegations at the Conference of the Parties (COPs), to national organizations,

and local organizations in the field. To evoke change for gender equality and environmental sustainability, powerful forms of implementation are needed. To this end, it is important to involve new actors – i.e. to work with actors which gender and environmental stakeholders have not worked with before, or with whom we have not worked enough. For instance, training needs to go further in terms of engaging with men and on masculinities in terms of environmental issues. This is important to address questions such as: who owns land? Who has the power? Who makes the decision over natural resources? By discussing these questions collectively through training for gender equality, we can move towards solutions.

Employing multiple approaches

Training on gender and the environment requires different approaches. The basic approach centres on human rights, but we also need the approach of intersectionality and territory. This means that we need to view the issues not only on a small-scale, but also on a larger-scale.

Accompanying training with knowledge generation, policies, technical assistance, and monitoring and evaluation (M&E)

It is necessary that training be accompanied with knowledge generation, data and information; policies at the local and national level; technical assistance to understand what gender means in an environmental context; and monitoring and evaluation.

“We cannot keep just doing training and training hundreds of people. We need to evaluate and monitor if we are having an impact and helping to reduce climate change and the environmental crisis.”

**– Itza Castañeda,
Webinar panellist**

There is a need to generate new local knowledge on gender and environmental statistics, and to use this to develop and inform training. Moreover, it is vital to monitor and to evaluate if we are having impact with our trainings. We cannot keep just going training, and training hundreds of people. We need to evaluate and monitor if we are having an impact and helping to reduce climate change and the environmental crisis.

Training is required for the legislative sector and the private sector to evoke changes in laws and practices that perpetuate gender inequality, the environmental crisis, and the linkages between them. To this end, it is vital to bring international frameworks to the national level and to work with civil society.

WAYS FORWARD

USING TRAINING FOR GENDER EQUALITY TO HELP REALIZE THE PROMISE OF BEIJING

To realize the promise of Beijing, training for gender equality needs to expand and respond to real needs on the ground. This section summarizes the ways forward proposed by the Virtual Dialogue Webinar panellists in the areas of gender data, gender-based violence, and gender and the environment.

Improving and expanding training on gender statistics

Turning promises in the PFA into action requires sustained capacity development. Promises that are not monitored due to a lack of data are likely to receive less priority. Thus, the following needs are clear in terms of training on gender statistics:

- Multilateral development institutions and bilateral donors need to encourage and support the development of national capacity by providing resources and technical assistance, so that countries can fully measure the work done by women and men (see paragraph 209 of the PFA).
- International organizations, civil society, the state and private sector must push for investments in national statistical capacities and gender mainstreaming in their strategies.
- There is a need to integrate a gender perspective not only in official statistics, but also in how national statistical systems operate. This means training not only NSOs, but also ministries, departments and agencies, CSOs, research institutions, etc. within each national statistical system to ensure that a gender perspective is integrated in all statistical operations.

“Beijing, CEDAW and the SDGs all provide a strong mandate on gender and [...] on the environment. So why do we still have limited, fragmented data after 25 years? We need to train partners on how to link data and actions, [...] on how to connect gender-differentiated data and environmental actions, and on how to measure impacts.”

– Itza Castañeda,
Webinar panellist

“There is need to create more and better gender data stories, and this is where much work is need in terms of training and communicating these numbers, to give them a human face for better uptake in decisions.”

– Jessamyn Encarnacion,
Webinar panellist

- We need to create gender data stories to be able to better communicate to users, among others. Statisticians are faced with challenges in “making the numbers talk”, to make the data feel like reality for their target audience. The question is: how can we do better? How can we combine the strength of various sources of data, both quantitative and qualitative? How can official sources and unconventional sources of data be used to complement each other? For this, we need discussions and training for gender equality offers a powerful forum for such debate.
- We need to calculate and interpret statistics on various thematic topics – such as on gender and the environment. We know that limited and fragmented data exists in relation to gender and the environment, for example. There is a lack of baselines, which jeopardizes accountability and leaves us unable to measure impact. This means that we need training on generating more data, and on interpreting gender data – in addition to intersectional data and multi-level disaggregation – in line with the principle of leaving no one behind. We need to train our partners – international organizations, governments, civil society, academia and the private sector – on how to document case studies related to environmental issues. There is a need for training on how to connect sex-disaggregated data and environmental actions, as well as for train on how to measure impacts. We need new methodologies and to be creative to truly reflect the situation on the ground.
- To effectively capacitate national statistical systems and gender statistics – and thus meet the promises we made in the PFA – the availability and accessibility of training resources are simply not enough. Political commitment is imperative.

Refining training on gender-based violence

As the scourge of gender-based violence rages the world over, training for gender equality must continue to build capacities to prevent and combat GBV. In particular:

- Training needs to pay special attention to women in especially vulnerable situations, such as refugees, migrants and women with disabilities. Engaging both women and men in training processes is very important, as is training for service delivery actors and partners to ensure comprehensive, available, accessible, quality and timely services for women and girls, especially the ones who suffer violence.
- Training on gender-based violence must monitor and evaluate change. A mix of both qualitative and quantitative approaches can be useful to assess changes in attitudes and behaviours around violence – such as the GEMS programme’s use of self-administered interviews or audio-recorded questions with participants, both students and teachers. This gives a high amount of reliability to the data, encourages the Government’s acceptance of the findings, and enables training initiatives to better evaluate change.

“Engaging women and men in the process is very important to build respectful relationships, gender equality. [Training is important for] positioning service systems that cover both urban and rural communities.”

– Rania Ayman,
Webinar panellist

Amplifying training on gender and the environment

The need for training on gender and the environment is more urgent than ever, in order to tackle pressing issues as they emerge. To this end:

- We need to develop new methods and topics of training. While some existing methods, topics and resources remain useful, others are no longer useful given the scale and specificities of the current environmental crisis.
- Civil society must demand that governments uphold their commitments on the environment, recalling the mandates and pledges of Beijing, CEDAW and the SDGs. Training for gender equality can, and should, be used to raise awareness among governments of their commitments, as well as to build civil society's advocacy capacities to insist on action.
- There is a need to link training on gender and the environment to other issues and areas, such as gender-based violence and the environment. It is not easy to make the link between gender-based violence and the environment, and there is a clear lack of knowledge on how to address gender-based violence in the environmental field. This is an urgent challenge given the many forms of GBV in the environmental context, especially the rising levels of violence against environmental human rights defenders, including women human rights defenders.
- Training is needed on emerging issues, such as environmental and climate change migrants and displacement. To date, special trainings and special training methodologies have not been developed on these urgent issues.
- It is vital to anchor global environmental agreements within national contexts so as to encourage a gender-responsive approach. Training is a key strategy to

“In training [we need to ask] where are we moving? What is the change? At what level? A mix of both qualitative and quantitative approaches has proved really useful.”

– Hemlata Verma,
Webinar panellist

“We are not measuring impacts in the environmental field. This is probably because we do not know how to measure. We need to learn, we need to teach, and we need to build capacity on measuring impacts.”

– Itza Castañeda,
Webinar panellist

build capacities to anchor international agreements at the national level.

- There is a need to recognize equality both as a driver for transformational change, and as a catalyst to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of environment initiatives. It is important to recognize both drivers.
- It is important to work on both capacity and policy, in terms of developing and implementing the knowhow at the national and local levels for both the environment sector and the gender and women's sector. To this end, both sectors must work together – including through training.
- Traditionally, environmental issues have been seen as a rural issue, but this is no longer the case – 80% of the population lives in urban spaces and they have different environmental problems. We need to include urban environmental responses in our trainings.

- Gender-responsive policies are required in a range of areas– from climate change to biodiversity, energy, forests, water, and finance. Finance is very important. For the first time in history, all of the major financing mechanisms related to gender and the environment have gender mandates and gender action plan. There is a need to create spaces and skills to enable women and women’s organizations at the national and sub-national levels to access these financial mechanisms. As such, it is vital to develop guidelines, collect case studies, generate knowledge, and engage in capacity building within the secretariats of major conventions, as well as at the national level.
- To enhance accountability, capacity building is required to create frameworks and mechanics to monitor and report on implementation. This is a clear need, as current national reports on Beijing, CEDAW or the SDGs are not mentioning gender and environmental issues nearly enough.

“We need to work together. We cannot just leave this issue to the environment sector. We need to enhance the gender sector, and to reinforce their knowledge and abilities to address environmental issues.”

– Itza Castañeda,
Webinar panellist

PARTICIPANTS

Participants' engagement made the 15th Virtual Dialogue a resounding success. This report is based on the contributions of our expert Webinar panellists and our audience of nearly 200 participants. Both the Webinar and forum were moderated by Ruya Leghari, Community of Practice Consultant for the UN Women Training Centre. A recording of the Webinar is [available on our YouTube](#) channel.



200
participants
in the Virtual
Dialogue Webinar
and forum



Itza Castañeda, International Union for Conservation of Nature

Itza is a Gender and Sustainable Development Special Adviser with IUCN's Global Gender Office. She has almost 20 years of experience in initiatives involving public policy development, local institutions, and training on gender equality. Itza was the Director of Gender Equity at Mexico's Secretariat of Environment and Natural Resources (2001-2011) and served as Senior Gender Adviser for UNDP in Mexico (2004-2011). Since 2012, she advises environmental and gender policy as IUCN's gender focal point for Mexico, with particular involvement in the REDD+ process.



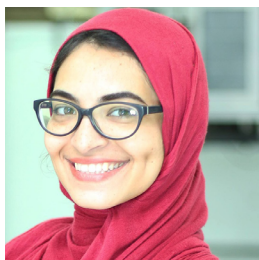
Jessamyn Encarnacion, UN Women Global Gender Data Programme

Jessamyn is the Statistics Specialist for UN Women's global gender data programme, Making Every Woman and Girl Count. Previously, she worked on the data analysis for the 8th Edition of the flagship "Progress of the World's Women" publication. Previously, she worked for more than 15 years with the Philippines National Statistical Coordination Board, rising to Director of the Social Statistics Office in 2013. She capped her national portfolio as interim Assistant National Statistician of the Philippine Statistics Authority during its formative period in 2014-15.



Hemlata Verma, International Center for Research on Women

Hemlata is a Technical Specialist on Gender, Violence and Sexual Reproductive Health Rights at the International Center for Research on Women. At ICRW, she handles operations research, programme evaluation, grounding in gender analysis and capacity building. Hemlata leads the Promoting Adolescents' Engagement, Knowledge and Health programme in Rajasthan, and the Safe Spaces for Sexual and Reproductive Health of Adolescent Girls initiative. She also works on the Gender Equity Movement in Schools (GEMS) programme to prevent GBV by engaging adolescents in critical thinking and self-reflection.



Rania Ayman, Entreprenelle and Beijing+25 Youth Task Force

Rania is the Founder and Managing Director of Entreprenelle, a mission-driven enterprise that strives to bridge the gender gap economically by educating, training and linking women to resources in Egypt. In 2019, she was named a member of the Beijing+25 Youth Task Force by UN Women, a group of 30 young leaders driving change in their communities and guiding UN efforts to place young people at the centre of the Beijing+25 process.

**UN WOMEN IS THE UN ORGANIZATION
DEDICATED TO GENDER EQUALITY
AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN. A
GLOBAL CHAMPION FOR WOMEN AND
GIRLS, UN WOMEN WAS ESTABLISHED
TO ACCELERATE PROGRESS ON
MEETING THEIR NEEDS WORLDWIDE.**

UN Women supports UN Member States as they set global standards for achieving gender equality, and works with governments and civil society to design laws, policies, programmes and services needed to implement these standards. It stands behind women's equal participation in all aspects of life, focusing on five priority areas: increasing women's leadership and participation; ending violence against women; engaging women in all aspects of peace and security processes; enhancing women's economic empowerment; and making gender equality central to national development planning and budgeting. UN Women also coordinates and promotes the UN system's work in advancing gender equality.