



GEAR UP

BUILDING A UNITED NATIONS THAT REALLY WORKS FOR ALL WOMEN

CAMPAIGN FOR STRONGER GENDER EQUALITY ARCHITECTURE REFORM (GEAR) AT THE UN

A stronger women's organization that can deliver results on the ground:

- An Under-Secretary-General should head this entity for women, to ensure the necessary status required for representation and decision-making at the highest levels both in policy-development and program operations at the global and country levels. The new Under-Secretary-General post would provide higher level leadership than at present to more effectively drive the gender equality and women's empowerment agenda.
- Extensive field presence and a strong policy and programmatic mandate is essential for a strengthened UN entity for women to effectively improve the lives of women on the ground.
- Substantial and predictable resources to ensure that the new entity for women has the capacity to meet expectations and deliver results at all levels. It must be funded initially at a minimum level of \$500 million to \$1 billion USD with increases over time.
- Accountability within the new entity for women, at both national and international levels, including through meaningful involvement of civil society, in particular non-governmental organizations for women.
- The new entity should also promote gender mainstreaming by the integration of gender equality and women's human rights throughout the UN and especially in the UN Country Pilots and in all UN reform processes.

Strengthening the UN's gender equality machinery is a crucial part of financing for development. It will better enable the UN and governments to deliver on promises made to advance gender equality and women's human rights, which are essential components of development at the global and country levels.

To read a more comprehensive discussion of women's concerns about gender equality and gender mainstreaming in the UN and UN Reform:

<http://www.cwgl.rutgers.edu/globalcenter/policy/unadvocacy/Gender%20Equality%20Architecture%20and%20UN%20Reforms%20July%202006.pdf>; and at <http://www.wedo.org>.

TO JOIN THE GEAR CAMPAIGN, EMAIL gearcampaign@gmail.com

CAMPAIGN KEY MESSAGES:

The following “talking points” address the most current arguments for and against strengthened gender architecture. Some of the points below are responses to arguments we’ve recently heard against moving ahead.

This is not a process that is driven by donors! The initial call for action was from women’s groups around the world, not from governments. Reform of gender architecture is supported and driven by NGOs and a range of states, including those from the global South.

A strong women’s entity will help to integrate gender throughout the UN system. Other UN agencies will still have the responsibility to integrate gender into their own programming and policies, but a new entity can help make this happen. A strong women’s entity will not “ghettoize” gender, as some have feared, but should expand attention to this issue within and outside the UN.

Creating a strong women’s entity will not detract from other development goals, but will enhance and work in tandem with those development efforts, as women’s equality is a key component of development.

A stronger UN gender entity will make financing for gender equality and financing for development more efficient and effective. A stronger gender entity will deliver better results and streamline official development assistance (ODA) delivery at the country level, including in providing gender-disaggregated data.

There has been no substantive resistance mounted against strengthening the UN’s gender architecture. The resistance has been grounded in other issues related to UN politics and UN reform. It is imperative that governments move ahead on institutional arrangements that give public support to the actual gender issues.

A new women’s entity must have core responsibilities at national/operational and global/policy levels. It is imperative to strengthen the functioning of the UN on gender equality “on the ground”, as well as at the global level.

A new women’s entity must be “built to win”. It must be adequately funded or it simply will not be able to do the work it needs to do. It needs to be led by an Under Secretary General to ensure representation at highest levels within the UN system.

The system as it now exists is simply not working well enough to deliver effective results for women’s lives around the world. It needs to be improved and strengthened, with urgency.

All UN agencies need to strengthen their own work on gender simultaneously with the process of creating a new entity. Agencies and offices must bolster and evaluate their current gender work, collect relevant and sex-disaggregated data, present annual reports to the GA, etc.

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