



# Action Coalitions

## **GLOBAL ACCELERATION PLAN**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**



# The ACTION COALITIONS Journey

We would like to thank the Governments of France and Mexico for their leadership as co-hosts of the Generation Equality Forum, together with the support of civil society and youth as well as the Action Coalition Leaders and Commitment Makers for signaling their support to accelerate progress and catalyze action towards gender equality. UN Women serves as the Secretariat of the Generation Equality Forum and Action Coalitions.



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Design and Illustration: theDifference Consulting



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



## IT IS TIME TO MOVE FROM RHETORIC TO ACTION

26 years after the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, **too little has changed.** There, and in multiple forums since, including in the Sustainable Development Goals, world leaders have pledged to eliminate gender inequalities and realize women's and girls' human rights. Yet, public commitments have not been met with the action, financing or implementation of laws, policies and programs needed to meet these goals.

**At current rates of progress, more than 2.1 billion women and girls will live in countries that will not reach any key gender equality targets by 2030. And no woman or girl will live in a country that meets all of them.<sup>1</sup>**

COVID-19 has made the situation worse. In country after country women and girls have been disproportionately impacted: they make up the majority of frontline health and other essential workers and have experienced surges in violence, poverty, and unpaid work. Government responses have been insufficient: only a small fraction of social protection, labour market and fiscal policies to address COVID-19 are gender-sensitive.<sup>2</sup>

In this **UN Decade for Action on Gender Equality**, it is time for change. It is time to move from rhetoric to action. Through the Generation Equality Forum, which kicked off in Mexico and culminated in France, we are building a powerful, global movement for gender equality that will deliver progress for women and girls, in all their diversity.

The Generation Equality Action Coalitions take on six critical issues that underpin gender equality: i) Gender-Based Violence; ii) Economic Justice and Rights; iii) Bodily Autonomy and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR); iv) Feminist Action for Climate Justice; v) Technology and Innovation for Gender Equality; and vi) Feminist Movements and Leadership.

<sup>1</sup> Equal Measures 2030, 2020. Bending the Curve Towards Gender Equality by 2030. Surrey, United Kingdom: Equal Measures 2030, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> See UNDP and UN Women. 2020. COVID-19 Global Gender Response Tracker. <https://data.undp.org/gendertacker/>. Of 3,112 policy measures in response to COVID-19 in 219 countries and territories, only 1,299 across 187 countries and territories are gender sensitive. Most focus on addressing violence against women and girls (832 in 149 countries), whereas measures to strengthen women's economic security (287) and address unpaid care work (180) are much fewer in number.

26 YEARS AFTER THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN,

# TOO LITTLE HAS CHANGED

COVID-19 HAS EXACERBATED THE GENDER INEQUALITY CRISIS

**640M+**

women have experienced physical and sexual violence at the hands of their intimate partner<sup>1</sup>

**3X**

the amount of unpaid care work women do compared to men<sup>3</sup>

**19%**

of girls are married before the age of 18<sup>5</sup>

**<1%**

of global DAC aid for gender equality goes to women rights organizations<sup>7</sup>

**190M**

women who wanted to avoid pregnancy did not use any contraceptive method<sup>2</sup>

**2/3**

of women are in the workforce compared to 90% of men, which remains largely unchanged for the last 3 decades<sup>4</sup>

**135.6**

estimated years before women will achieve pay or leadership equity with men<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> World Health Organization, 2021. Violence Against Women Prevalence Estimates 2018. Geneva: World Health Organization, p.12.  
<sup>2</sup> UN Women, 2020. Gender equality: Women's rights in review 25 years after Beijing. New York: UN Women, p. 2. Refers to women of reproductive age.  
<sup>3</sup> UN Women, 2019. Progress of the World's Women: Families in a Changing World. New York: UN Women, p. 146.  
<sup>4</sup> World Economic Forum, 2021. Global Gender Gap Report 2021. Geneva: World Economic Forum  
<sup>5</sup> UN Women, 2020. Gender equality: Women's rights in review 25 years after Beijing. New York: UN Women.  
<sup>6</sup> World Economic Forum, 2021. Global Gender Gap Report 2021. Geneva: World Economic Forum  
<sup>7</sup> OECD DAC Network on Gender Equality, July 2020. "Aid Focused on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: A snapshot of current funding and trends over time in support of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action." Paris: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.



## WORKING TOGETHER TO DRIVE CHANGE

The Action Coalitions are bringing together governments, women's, feminist and youth-led organizations, international organizations, foundations and businesses to drive change. Through blueprints for action co-created by Action Coalition leaders, they are catalyzing collective commitments; sparking global and local conversations between generations and across communities; and driving substantial increases in public and private funding.

## ACTION COALITION BLUEPRINTS

Each Action Coalition blueprint lays out a powerful vision for success, as well as priority actions, strategies and tactics to help achieve it. The Action Coalitions' work has been informed by a commitment to feminist leadership, transformative change and putting an intersectional approach into practice—that is recognizing that many women and girls experience multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination based on their identities, realities, and unequal access to power and resources and taking meaningful steps to address it. The blueprints also establish key targets that will be used to assess the impact of the Action Coalitions' work. Together, the blueprints represent a Global Acceleration Plan for gender equality. They will increase the pace of progress towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and the full implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in this UN Decade for Action on Gender Equality.

## COMMITMENTS

Now, Commitment Makers from all sectors of society, are stepping up to provide resources, lead advocacy, implement law and policy change, and establish programmes to help make the blueprints a reality. Each Action Coalition is also mobilizing collective commitments: actions that can bring impact to scale. These include a Global Alliance on Care to expand quality, public care services; an initiative to shape markets and increase access to reproductive health commodities; the establishment of a Gender-Just Climate Solutions Scale Fund; and a Global Alliance for Sustainable Feminist Movements, amongst others.

## ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability is being built in to the process: Commitment Makers will report on their progress; UN Women will monitor progress towards Action Coalition targets; and together diverse stakeholders will measure the collective impact of the Action Coalitions on the lives of women and girls. Action Coalitions will also evaluate the extent to which they are creating and implementing processes that contribute to transformative change, by attending to inequalities in power among and between leaders and taking concrete steps to address them.

The Action Coalitions can deliver concrete progress on gender equality across generations to come for girls and women in all of their diversity.

But to be successful, diverse stakeholders need to come to the table with **COMMITMENTS, RESOURCES** and **ACTION**.

**WILL YOU JOIN US?**

# ACTION COALITIONS APPROACH





# THE ACTION COALITIONS JOURNEY

From the start, the Action Coalitions and their blueprints were conceptualized and developed through a process of co-creation that brought together feminist and youth leaders, and representatives of other civil society organizations, governments, foundations, international organizations, and the private sector.

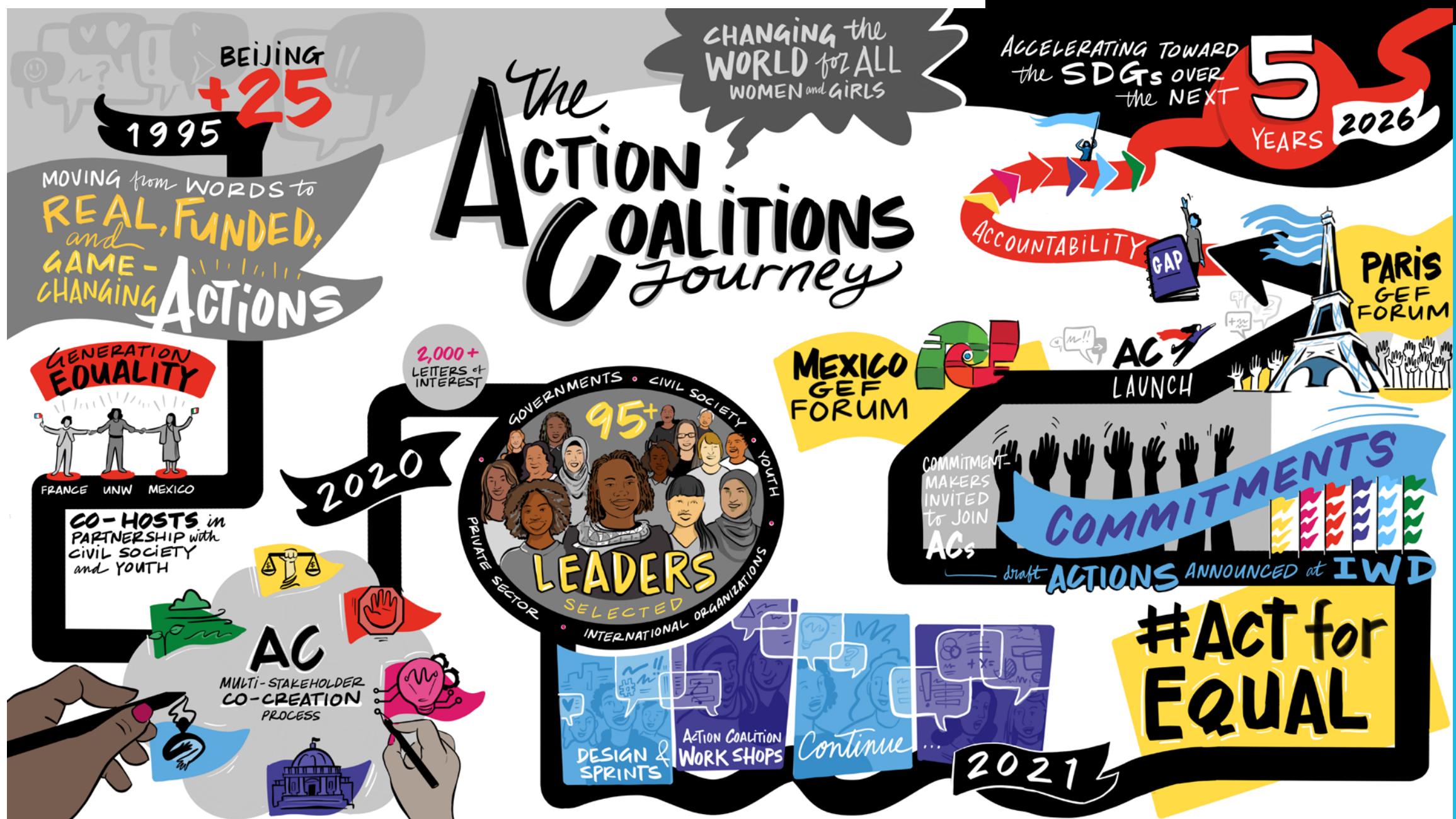
At a design sprint in Mexico City in December 2019, diverse leaders weighed a range of issues that needed urgent action to advance women's and girls rights, in all their diversity, and the extent to which they were already being addressed through other forums and initiatives. Drawing on their advice, the Generation Equality Forum Core

Group – UN Women, Mexico, France, and the Civil Society Advisory Group–narrowed in on six Action Coalition themes and launched a call for leaders from all sectors to step forward to develop blueprints to address them.

At a second design sprint in Paris in February 2020, diverse leaders envisioned how the Action Coalition themes would accelerate change for women and girls in all their diversity and recommended potential areas for action. They also defined the principles that inform the work of the Action Coalitions – intersectionality, feminist leadership and transformation – and started to sketch out possible models for governance and accountability moving forward.

More than 2000 civil society, international and regional organizations, governments, foundations, and businesses submitted letters of interest to become leaders of Action Coalitions. Applications from feminist, women's rights, youth-led and other civil society groups were reviewed through a process established by the Youth Task Force and Civil Society Advisory Group, which involved civil society representatives from other governance mechanisms established for the Generation Equality Forum. The process aimed to ensure diverse leadership from civil society and youth-led organizations working at various levels from the grassroots to global, with different areas of expertise, and representing historically marginalized communities, including groups led by LGBTQ+ people, women and girls with disabilities, and indigenous women and girls, among others. A final group of leaders across all sectors and for all Action Coalitions was agreed upon by the Core Group, which as of September 2020, also included representatives from the Youth Task Force.

Through a series of workshops, consultations and dialogues, Action Coalition leaders worked together and with their constituencies to develop the blueprints. The draft blueprints were shared at the Generation Equality Mexico City Forum and then, taking into account ideas generated there and in other spaces, finalized and formally launched at the Generation Equality Paris Forum.





## WHY ARE THE ACTION COALITIONS CATALYTIC?

Girls, women and gender-diverse people cannot live full, free and equal lives if discriminatory social norms, laws and practices hold them back and stifle their potential. But gender equality is not just good for women and girls: it is the foundation for building just and equitable societies, where everyone can thrive. It underpins economic and social systems that include, and work for, all people and it is essential for the survival of the planet.

The effort is all the more urgent now. COVID-19 has laid bare critical gaps in equality that have left millions of women and girls - particularly those who are most marginalized and who experience discrimination on multiple grounds - behind. COVID-19 has exacerbated the lack of progress on gender equality by deepening poverty, increasing rates of violence, cutting off access to critical social services like school and health care, and increasing women's and girls' burden of unpaid work. The pandemic is straining health systems, widening socio-economic gaps, and shifting strategic, political, and funding priorities, all of which disproportionately and negatively affect women and girls.

In this light, the Generation Equality Action Coalitions are an extraordinary platform for change, both in their approach and level of ambition. They bring together diverse stakeholders to address some of the most intractable barriers to equality—from violence, to climate change, and economic systems that leave women and girls behind.

Action Coalitions represent a unique partnership. Their Leaders and Commitment Makers include feminist activists, diverse leaders of grassroots, indigenous and community-based organizations, youth leaders, and representatives from private foundations, the private sector, international and regional organizations, and governments, who are committed to taking collective action for gender equality. They have been working together to build plans that, if implemented and fully funded, will lead to lasting and transformative change and help to ensure that women, girls and gender diverse people everywhere can fully enjoy their human rights. And in doing so they are demonstrating how diverse stakeholders can increase their impact by coming together, actively working to equalize power in decision making, and centering the needs of the most marginalized communities in their work.

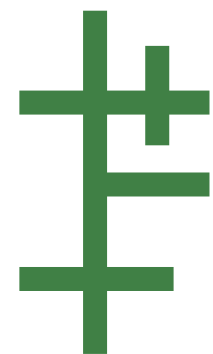


Photo: UN Women/Dzilam Méndez



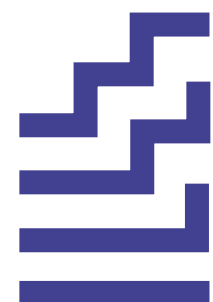
# WHAT ARE THE CORE PRINCIPLES OF THE ACTION COALITIONS?

Intersectionality, feminist leadership and transformation are principles that inspire **how** the Action Coalitions operate and **what** they aspire to achieve. All Action Coalition Leaders and Commitment Makers are encouraged to reflect these principles within their own organizations, governments, institutions, and companies, as well as in their collective work.



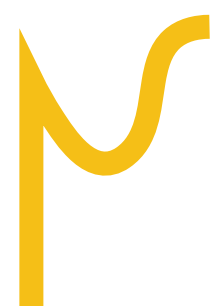
## INTERSECTIONALITY

Action Coalitions seek to put an intersectional approach into practice by shedding light on the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination that are experienced by many women and girls because of their identities, realities, backgrounds, and unequal access to power and resources, and addressing them. It requires recognizing the unique challenges faced by people who experience intersecting forms of discrimination and the power dynamics and systems that reinforce them, and meaningfully and intentionally working to counter them.<sup>1</sup>



## FEMINIST LEADERSHIP

Feminist leadership aims to explicitly and intentionally redistribute power and responsibility in a way that is inclusive, participatory, and mindful of gender, age, race, social class, sexual orientation, ability and other intersecting identities. It involves a continuous commitment to keep vigilant about - and challenge - the (re)production of practices and behaviours that deter collaboration, proactive listening and that benefit a few at the expense of others.<sup>2</sup>



## TRANSFORMATION

Action Coalitions seek to transform structures, systems and power that reinforce inequalities as an end goal, and in their own ways of working. In so doing, the Action Coalitions seek to build a collective vision through approaches that value co-creation, dialogue, shared perspective, and centering the voices of historically marginalized groups. Youth leadership is critical to the transformative vision of the Generation Equality Action Coalitions.

<sup>1</sup> Crenshaw, K. 1989. "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics," University of Chicago Legal Forum: Vol. 1: 139-167. Analysis in this document provided by the Young Feminist Manifesto, March 2021. <https://chicagounbound.uchicago.edu/uclf/vol1989/iss1/8/>

<sup>2</sup> See Young Feminist Europe. 2021. "Young Feminist Manifesto." Accessed 1 March 2021. <https://www.youngfeminist.eu/2021/03/young-feminist-manifesto/> for a full overview and analysis of feminist leadership.

# WHAT CONCRETE ACTIONS ARE BEING PUT FORWARD?

Action Coalition leaders have come together to define a targeted set of actions that are concrete, transformative, measurable and require multi-stakeholder collaboration. The actions have been informed by a rigorous analysis of the threats and challenges to women's and girls' human rights, and built on experience and evidence about what strategies and tactics are effective in driving change. They recognize the critical role of feminist and other social movements in pushing for accountability on gender equality and human rights. And they seek to amplify impact by drawing on the different strengths, roles and responsibilities that Action Coalition Leaders and Commitment-Makers bring to the table. These are reflected in individual and **collective commitments for action**.



Photo: UN Women/Ryan Brown



# TOGETHER,

the Action Coalition blueprints represent a Global Acceleration Plan for gender equality.

The following actions drive this agenda:



## GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

- 1** More states and regional actors ratify international and regional conventions and public and private sector institutions strengthen, implement and finance evidence-driven laws, policies and action plans to end gender-based violence against women and girls in all their diversity. *In so doing, 550 million more women and girls will live in countries with laws and policies prohibiting all forms of gender-based violence against women and girls by 2026.*
- 2** Scale up implementation and financing of evidence-driven prevention strategies by public and private sector institutions and women's rights organizations to drive down prevalence of gender-based violence against women, adolescent girls and young women in all their diversity including in humanitarian settings. *In so doing, increase by 50% the number of countries that include one or more evidence-driven prevention strategies on gender-based violence against women and girls in national policies by 2026.*
- 3** Scale up implementation and financing of coordinated survivor-centered, comprehensive, quality, accessible and affordable services for survivors of gender-based violence against women and girls in all their diversity including in humanitarian settings. *In so doing, more women and girls will live in countries with multi-sectoral action plans on GBV which include provision of police, justice, health and social sector services by 2026.*
- 4** Enhance support and increase accountability and quality, flexible funding from states, private sector, foundations, and other donors to autonomous girl-led & women's rights organizations working to end gender-based violence against women and girls in all their diversity. *In so doing, progressively improve and increase international funding by 50% to women's rights organizations, activists and movements including those working to address gender-based violence against women and girls in all their diversity by 2026.*



## ECONOMIC JUSTICE AND RIGHTS

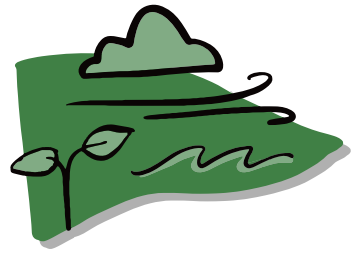
- 1** By 2026, increase the number of countries with a comprehensive set of measures in gender-responsive public and private quality care services, and law and policy reforms, including through **investments of recommended 3-10% of national income and creation of up to 80 million decent care jobs** to recognize, reduce and redistribute unpaid care work and reward paid work and represent care workers, while guaranteeing care worker's decent pay and labour rights, including in the private sector
- 2** Create an inclusive and enabling legal and policy environment and engage women to expand decent work in the formal and informal economy to **reduce the number of working women living in poverty by 2026 by a recommended 17 million** and decrease the gap in labour force participation between prime-age women and men with small children by half, resulting in an additional 84 million women joining the labour force.
- 3** Expand women's access to and control over productive resources through increasing women's access to and control over land, gender responsive financial products and services, and the number of firms owned by women by 2026. In doing so,
  - ▶ **Secure access to ownership and control over land and housing is increased for 7 million women;**
  - ▶ **The gender gap in women's financial inclusion is reduced to 6% by increasing both formal and informal financial inclusion, including for women at risk of being excluded from formal financial services;**
  - ▶ **The number of women's economic empowerment national programs integrating digital financial services and participation through gender-responsive platforms is increased;**
  - ▶ **The number of firms owned by women is increased by 25% in all contexts, including in fragile and conflict situations.**
- 4** Design and implement gender-responsive macro-economic plans, budget reforms and stimulus packages so that the **number of women and girls living in poverty is reduced by 85 million** including through quality public social protection floors and systems by 2026.



## BODILY AUTONOMY & SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS

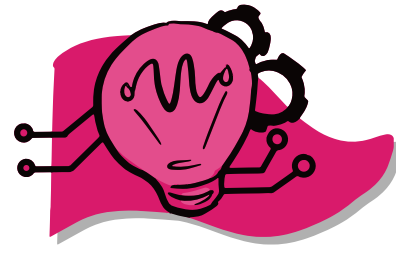
- 1** Increase delivery of comprehensive sexuality education in and out of school **reaching 50 million more children, adolescents, and youth** in all their diversity by 2026.
- 2** Within a comprehensive framework that includes SRHR services as an essential component of UHC for all people, **increase the quality of and access to contraceptive services for 50 million more adolescent girls and women in all their diversity;** support removal of restrictive policies and legal barriers, ensuring 50 million more adolescent girls and women in all their diversity live in jurisdictions where they can access safe and legal abortion by 2026.
- 3** Through gender norms change and increasing knowledge of rights, **empower all people including 260 million more girls, adolescents and women in all of their diversity** to make autonomous decisions about their bodies, sexuality and reproduction by 2026; enact legal and policy change to protect and promote bodily autonomy and SRHR in at least 20 countries by 2026.
- 4** Increase accountability to, participation of and support for autonomous feminist and women's organizations (including girl and adolescent-led, and Indigenous organizations and collectives), women human rights defenders and peacebuilders. Strengthen organizations, networks and movements working to promote and protect bodily autonomy and SRHR.





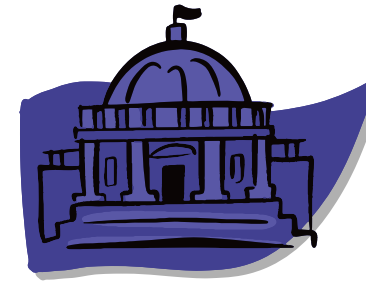
## FEMINIST ACTION FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

- 1 By 2026, increase the percentage of global climate finance flows, public and private, directed towards and invested in gender-just climate solutions in particular at grassroots and rural levels, including **through an increase to 88% in the proportion of marked climate bilateral finance targeted towards gender.**
- 2 Increase the proportion of women and girls in decision-making and leadership positions throughout environmental governance and sectors relevant for transitioning to an inclusive, circular and regenerative green economy by 2026.
- 3 Enhance and leverage the capacity of millions more women and girls in all their diversity to build resilience to climate and disaster risks, mitigate climate change, and address loss and damage, including through the provision of quality education, community-based cooperative models and land rights and tenure security.
- 4 By 2026, **at least 20 countries demonstrate increased use of gender-environment statistics** for policy making by creating an enabling environment for and increased production of gender-environment statistics.



## TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION FOR GENDER EQUALITY

- 1 By 2026, **reduce by half the gender digital divide** across generations by accelerating meaningful access to digital technologies and universal digital literacy.
- 2 By 2026, **increase investments towards feminist technology and innovation by 50%** to support women's leadership as innovators and better respond to women and girls' most pressing needs.
- 3 By 2026, **double the proportion of women working in technology and innovation** by setting up new networks and benchmarks to transform innovation ecosystems.
- 4 By 2026, a majority of countries and tech companies demonstrate accountability by implementing policies and solutions against online and tech facilitated GBV and discrimination.



## FEMINIST MOVEMENTS & LEADERSHIP

- 1 By 2026, **double the global annual growth rate of funding** from all sectors committed to women-led, girl-led and feminist-led movements, organizations, and funds in all their diversity, including those led by historically marginalized women and people, including trans, intersex and non-binary people.
- 2 Promote, expand, strengthen, and protect civic space across all domains, including online, and support the efforts of feminist activists in all their diversity, including women's human rights defenders, women peacebuilders, trans, intersex and non-binary people, girls and other members of historically marginalized groups, to defend civic space and eliminate barriers to feminist action, organizing and mobilization in all its diversity.
- 3 By 2026, advance substantive representation and increase the meaningful participation, leadership and decision-making power of girls and youth leaders, and of women, and feminist leaders in all their diversity, including those who are trans, intersex and non-binary, through efforts to: (1) Advance gender parity and the inclusion of those historically marginalized in all aspects, sectors and levels of public and economic decision-making, including the private sector, civil society, international organizations, political and government institutions and executive and legislative positions (2) Promote and expand feminist, gender transformative, intersectional approaches to decision-making and leadership, which acknowledge, analyse and challenge existing power relations and advance inclusive, gender transformative and rights-affirming laws and policies.
- 4 By 2026, allocate, monitor and evaluate specific, flexible financial, technical, and other resources for adolescent girls and young feminist leaders and their movements and organizations to strengthen them, and create safe and inclusive spaces to lead, share ownership and substantively participate in and co-create decision-making processes.





## WHAT COMES NEXT FOR THE ACTION COALITIONS?

Action Coalition leaders and Commitment Makers will now work together to implement the blueprints through the delivery of specific resources, advocacy, legal and policy change, and programmes. Commitment Makers will join a dynamic community of practice, and share successes, challenges and lessons learned; take stock of progress; and identify areas where additional collective action and investment is needed to drive change.

Together, Action Coalitions will work to ensure accountability—for both progress against individual commitments and the collective impact of its work on the lives of women, girls and gender-diverse people.

**THIS IS THE START OF A PROCESS OF TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE.**

Photo: UN Women/Carlos Rivera



# THE GENERATION EQUALITY ACTION COALITIONS ARE THE WORLD'S ROADMAP TO ACCELERATE GENDER EQUALITY



**GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE**



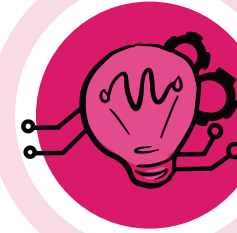
**ECONOMIC JUSTICE AND RIGHTS**



**BODILY AUTONOMY AND SRHR**



**FEMINIST ACTION FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE**



**TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION FOR GENDER EQUALITY**



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