



GENERATION EQUALITY  
FORUM



## Plenary Session

### Role of Local Governments in the Accelerated Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action

#### Concept Note

30<sup>th</sup> March 2021

12:00 – 13:30hrs (GMT-6 Mexico City Time)

The Fourth World Conference on Women, held in September 1995, achieved an unprecedented attendance: 17,000 participants and 30,000 activists traveled to Beijing to participate in the inauguration. Despite their great diversity and different global backgrounds, they all shared a single goal: gender equality and empowerment of all women, everywhere.

As a defining framework for change, the Beijing Platform for Action put forward broad commitments in twelve areas of special concern:

1. Women and the environment
2. Women in power and decision making
3. Girls
4. Women and the economy
5. Women and poverty
6. Violence against women
7. Women's human rights
8. Women's education and training
9. Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women
10. Women and health
11. Women and the media
12. Women and armed conflicts

Even now, 25 years later, these areas remain a powerful source of guidance and inspiration. The Beijing process unleashed remarkable political will and global visibility. It connected and strengthened the activism of women's movements on a global scale.

However, it should be noted that the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action not only established standards regarding women's extensive movements, but played a major role as a guiding and methodological tool for incorporating the gender perspective into the entire political, economic and social



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structure and system, with the aim of achieving substantive equality through equal access to opportunities. In other words, by incorporating gender perspective throughout all the public policy cycle, including budgeting, it is possible to identify differentiated needs, not only by sex, but also by age group, sector, etc. This allows for a better design and implementation of all government policies that will allow to respond effectively and efficiently to the identified problems, at international, domestic and local level.

The COVID-19 pandemic has dominated the local and international debate, prompting the emergence of the need to take care of people, especially the most vulnerable, and changing the perspective and organization of cities and territories. In this context, the specific impact on women and girls, the increase in gender-based violence due to lockdown measures and movement restrictions, and the relevance of gender-sensitive responses are key issues in the debate for equality and justice.

Recovery from economic slowdown and crisis must involve the transformation of existing models towards a feminist and care economy that reverses job losses, addresses informality, inequalities and technology gap, and encourages economies focused on the sustainability of life. The path to recovery must acknowledge and promote the role of women and feminist leaders, as well as the paramount importance of achieving greater autonomy for women by creating more inclusive cities and governments.

In this framework, the **Equality Generation Forum** is a global meeting convened by UN Women and co-chaired by the governments of Mexico and France, where a multiplicity of participants will come together to pursue gender equality. The actions are mainly based on the same logic that enabled the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action twenty-five years ago: the power of feminist activism, feminist solidarity and youth leadership to achieve transformational change. In this sense, the Forum is a crucial moment for the participation of gender equality advocates from all sectors of society –governments, civil society, private sector, entrepreneurs, trade unions, artists, academia and influential personalities– to foster a global dialogue that calls for urgent action and accountability towards achieving gender equality.

### **Towards a municipal feminist movement**

Since the Equality Generation campaign was established, the World Organization of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) has reaffirmed its commitment and dedication to its full realization, working to ensure that the five-year plans defined by the campaign adequately reflect and support the perspective of local and regional governments. Among other organizations, UCLG, through its Secretary General, co-leads the Action Coalition on Feminist Movements and Leadership, which addresses the issue of women's political leadership and representation in local decision-making bodies, as well as in municipal policies and actions, and local public life.



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Therefore, the Government of Mexico City and UCLG are summoning local and regional governments, international partners and civil society to participate in this Plenary Session of local and regional governments as part of the Generation Equality Forum, which will take place in virtual format in Mexico City in March 29-31 and will continue in the Paris Forum from June 30 to July 2.

## Format

The virtual session will have a duration of an hour and a half. It will be a high-level political debate, with the participation of city mayors and feminist leaders that will share the actions they have implemented in their territories to achieve substantive equality 25 years after the Beijing Conference.

The session will be held via Zoom. Simultaneous interpretation in Spanish, English and French will be available.

## Objectives

- To learn about the actions that local and regional governments have implemented in line with the 12 areas of concern identified by the Beijing Platform for Action.
- To discuss more inclusive economic and social recovery paths that contribute to the elimination of inequalities and promote and strengthen the autonomy of women in their diversity, the territories they inhabit, their neighborhoods, and their bodies.
- To establish the paths and future steps to move forward in the implementation of actions that favor substantive equality from the perspective of local and regional governments.

## Results

This event consolidates the integration of the Generation Equality Forums with Mayor Claudia Sheinbaum of Mexico City passing the leadership to Mayor Anne Hidalgo of Paris, the host city of the next Generation Equality Forum in June.

In addition to contributing to the ongoing debate and mobilization of cities and stakeholders committed to equality, this plenary session of local and regional governments will submit the recommendations and results of the participation of this group in the CSW65 and the status of the ongoing study on the experiences and realities of municipal feminist leadership.



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