

Plenary Session of Local and Regional Governments

Cities and territories at the forefront of an inclusive recovery: a review 25 years after Beijing

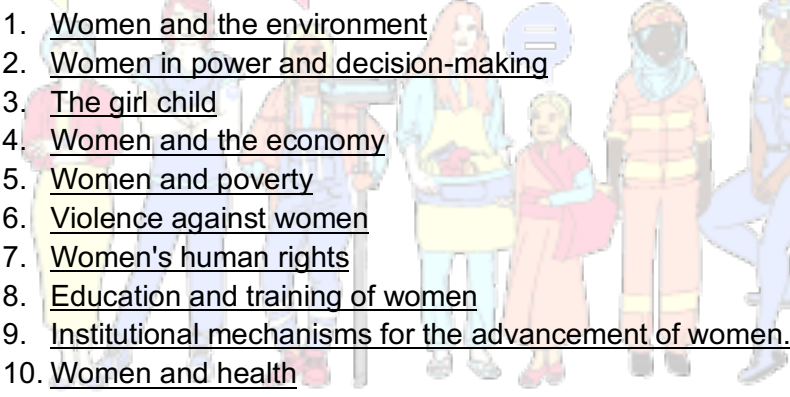
Generation Equality Forum, Mexico City

Tuesday, 30 March 2021, 12:00-13:30 (CST) / 20:00 – 21:30 (CET)

Concept note

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

As a defining framework for change, the Beijing Platform for Action made broad commitments in 12 critical areas of concern:

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

Even now, 25 years later, they 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 worldwide.

But not only did it set the tone for broad women's movements, it is also important to highlight the role of the **Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action** as a guiding and methodological tool for gender mainstreaming throughout the political, economic and social structure and system, aiming to achieve substantive equality through equal access to opportunities. In other words, by incorporating the gender perspective throughout the public policy cycle, including budgeting, it is possible to identify differentiated needs, not only by sex, but also by age group, sector, etc., which allows for better design and implementation of all government policies to respond effectively and efficiently to the problems detected, both at the international, national and local levels.

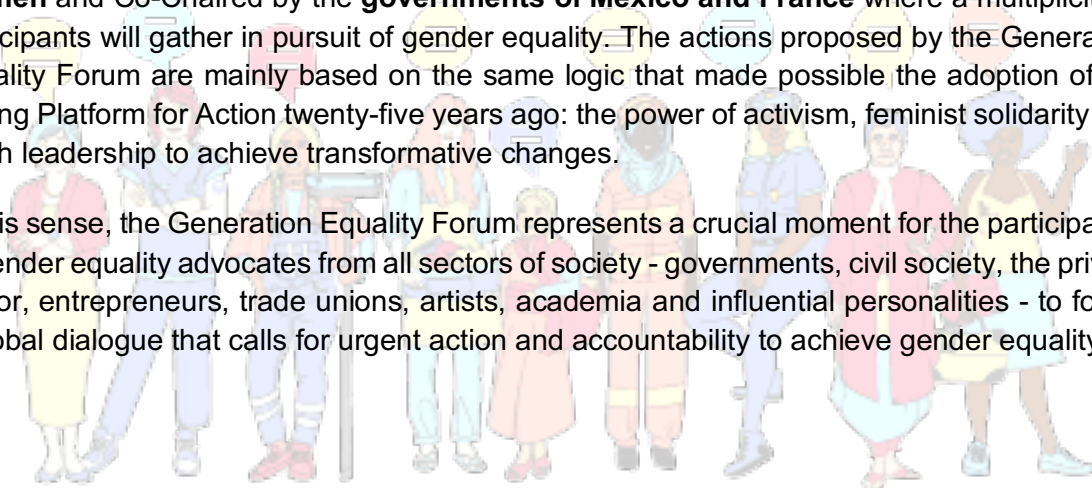
Current context

The **COVID-19 pandemic** has captured the local and international debate, shedding light on the urgent need to take care of people, especially the most vulnerable, transforming the perspective and form of organization of cities and territories. In this context, the specific impact on women and girls, the increase in gender-based violence in the face of confinement and movement restrictions, and the relevance of gender-sensitive responses are key issues in the debate for equality and justice.

Economic and crisis recovery must involve the transformation of existing models towards a feminist and care economy that reverses job losses, takes into account informality, inequalities and the technology gap, and encourages economies focused on the sustainability of life. The road to recovery must recognize and promote the role of women and feminist leaders, as well as the fundamental importance of achieving greater autonomy for women in the generation of more inclusive cities and governments.

Within this framework, the **Generation Equality 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 gather in pursuit of gender equality. The actions proposed by the Generation Equality Forum are mainly based on the same logic that made possible the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action twenty-five years ago: the power of activism, feminist solidarity and youth leadership to achieve transformative changes.

In this sense, the Generation Equality Forum represents a crucial moment for the participation of gender equality advocates from all sectors of society - governments, civil society, the private sector, entrepreneurs, trade unions, artists, academia and influential personalities - to foster a global dialogue that calls for urgent action and accountability to achieve gender equality.



Towards a Feminist Municipal Movement

As part of its international action -and with the purpose of contributing to the fulfillment of SDG 5 of the 2030 Agenda- the Government of Mexico City took part in 2019 in the launch of the Generation Equality Forum, where it committed to collaborate in its organization in the Mexican capital and to promote the participation of subnational governments in the gathering. In addition, on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women of 2020, the Chief of Government co-founded CHANGE, the first international network of cities in favor of gender equality. With a view to the celebration of the first Generation Equality Forum in 2021, Mexico City is leading this unprecedented high-level space dedicated especially to dialogue and exchange between local governments, key actors in the construction of equality and global development agendas.

Since the creation of the Generation Equality campaign, the World Organization of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) confirmed its commitment and dedication to its full

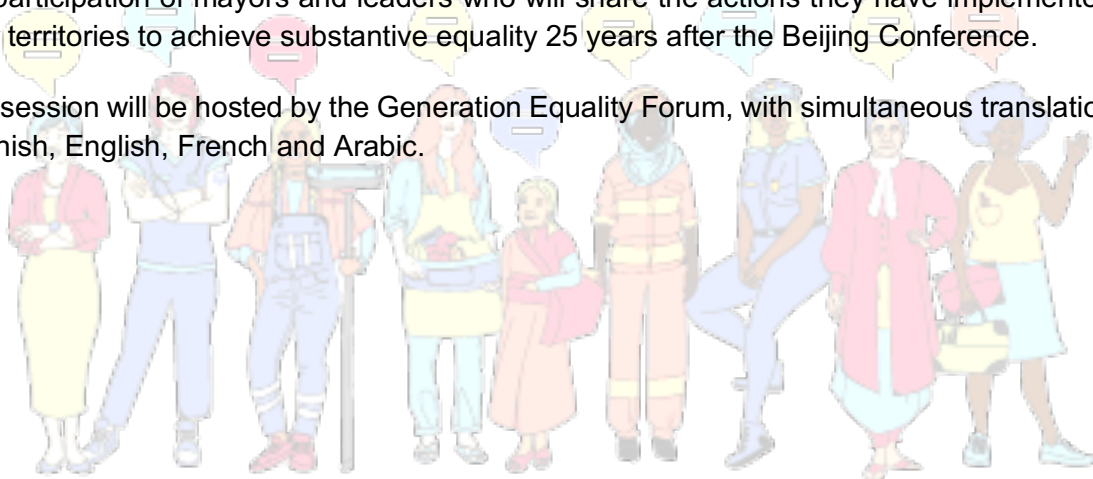
realization, working to ensure that the five-year plans defined by the campaign adequately reflect and support the perspective of local and regional governments. Among others, UCLG, represented by its Secretary General, co-leads the Action Coalition on Feminist Movements and Leadership, which addresses 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.

For this reason, the Government of Mexico City and UCLG, with the support of UN Women and the Government of Mexico, invite the constituency of local and regional governments, international partners and civil society to this Plenary Session of Local and Regional Governments during the Mexico City Generation Equality Forum, taking place in virtual format in the City of Mexico from 29 to 31 March and will culminate in the Paris from 30 June to 2 July.

Format

The virtual session will last 1h30 and will have the format of a high-level political debate, with the participation of mayors and leaders who will share the actions they have implemented in their territories to achieve substantive equality 25 years after the Beijing Conference.

The session will be hosted by the Generation Equality Forum, with simultaneous translation in Spanish, English, French and Arabic.



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 establish a dialogue on more inclusive economic and social recovery pathways, which contribute to the elimination of inequalities, promoting and enhancing the autonomy of women in their diversity, over the territories they inhabit, their neighborhoods, their bodies.
- To define paths and next steps to advance in the implementation of actions that favor substantive equality from the perspective of local and regional governments.

Results

The present event consolidates the integration of the Generation Equality Forums with the passage of the bastion from Chief of Government Claudia Sheinbaum to Mayor Anne Hidalgo, from Mexico City to Paris, as official venues of this important meeting.

In addition to contributing to the ongoing debate and mobilization of cities and partners committed to equality, this Plenary Session of Local and Regional Governments will present the recommendations and results of the constituency's participation in the Sixty-fifth session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW65) 2021 and the status of the ongoing study on the personal experiences of municipal feminist leadership.

