

BEIJING+30: UNESCO'S ACTIONS FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS

Achievements and Foresight



18 March 2025

10:00 – 11:15 am
United Nations (NY) – CR12

The 69th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW69) marks a significant milestone in the global pursuit of equality. This session coincides with the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Beijing+30), providing a crucial opportunity to review progress and renew commitments to women's rights and empowerment.



The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA), adopted in 1995 at the Fourth World Conference on Women, is a landmark document for advancing women's rights worldwide. Agreed upon by 189 countries, the BPfA remains the most comprehensive global policy framework and blueprint, addressing critical areas such as education, health, peace, climate justice, media, political participation, economic empowerment, and the elimination of violence against women and girls.

The Pact for the Future, adopted in September 2024, renewed commitments to equality and recognized it as crucial for achieving all Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This convergence of events creates a unique moment to assess current challenges affecting the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, evaluate its contribution to the 2030 Agenda, and forge new pathway.

The twelve critical areas of concern outlined in the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) remain as urgent as ever. These areas are central to UNESCO's unique mandate, across all its areas of work – in education, science, culture, communication, and information – driving its commitment to advancing human rights and ensuring that the voices and leadership of women and girls are recognized. This includes teachers, learners, journalists, artists, scientists, researchers, human rights advocates, and climate advocates.

UNESCO's commitment extends beyond traditional areas, incorporating cross-cutting themes and innovative approaches to promote equality. This includes sports, ocean science, artificial intelligence, and neurotechnology initiatives.

By leveraging its education, science, culture, and communication expertise, UNESCO addresses complex challenges such as the climate crisis and rapid technological advancements and plays a crucial role alongside its partner in implementing the BPfA.

Seizing the opportunity of this crucial moment, UNESCO is hosting a side event at CSW, featuring eight pilot initiatives that showcase achievements in advancing women's and girls' equal rights and opportunities, ensuring a more equitable future for all.



PROGRAMME

18 March 2025 • 10:00 – 11:15 am • UN HQ (NY) – CR12

	Welcome remarks
	Begoña Lasagabaster Director, Division for Gender Equality, UNESCO
	Video – Beijing30+ & UNESCO
35 mn	Panel 1 • UNESCO'S ACHIEVEMENTS IN IMPLEMENTING THE BPfA
35 mn	Panel 2 • UNESCO'S VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF THE BPfA
	Closing remarks

Rapporteur: Elodie Vialle

PANEL 1

UNESCO'S ACHIEVEMENTS IN IMPLEMENTING THE BPfA

Thirty years ago, UNESCO actively participated in the preparatory work for the BPfA. As the lead agency for education and communication, UNESCO has raised questions that remain burning issues today, such as women's contribution to peace and the challenges posed to women and girls by new technologies.

Progress in and through education

- UNESCO's efforts have contributed to significant progress, with **180 million more girls enrolled in primary and secondary education** between 1995 and 2018, and 50 million more girls enrolled in the last decade alone.
- UNESCO challenges harmful stereotypes in education and promotes **girls' and women's participation in STEM studies and careers**.
- UNESCO advocates for **quality and inclusive education for women and girls**, focusing on system-wide transformation through improved data, policies, legal and planning frameworks, and teaching practices with a particular emphasis on enhancing access to tertiary education and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET).

SPEAKERS

Elspeth McOmish

Programme Specialist UNESCO
The Global Accountability Dashboard on gender equality in and through education

Kafa Akroush

Head of Division, Gender Equality and Strategic Partnership, Educational Planning and Research Director, Ministry of Education, Jordan

UNESCO's support to the Government of Jordan's efforts to mainstream gender equality within its education policies and plans



Empowering women and girls in science

- The **L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science Programme** has awarded over 4,400 women researchers globally, fostering scientific leadership and visibility for women in research.
- With its **Call to Action: Closing the Gender Gap in Science**, UNESCO collaborates with global institutions to amplify women's roles in climate science, AI development, and Indigenous knowledge.
- Specific programmes address the **under-representation of women in engineering, mathematics, and technology**, ensuring increased participation and leadership roles.
- UNESCO also supports initiatives such as the **For Women in Science Programmes in Africa**, equipping young women scientists with research funding and mentorship opportunities.

SPEAKER

Happyness Ngonyani

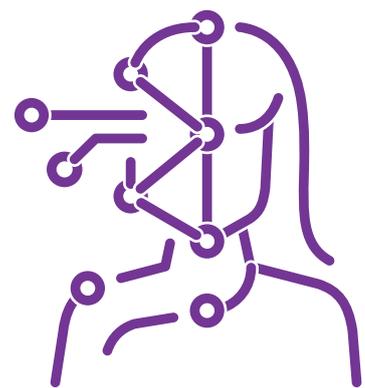
2024 Young Talent of the L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science Sub-Saharan Africa Programme

UNESCO's support to empower Women in Science



Tackling violence against women and girls

- Initiatives as **Safer Campuses Campaign**, aims to combat violence within universities and enhance student well-being across Eastern and Southern Africa.
- The **“Global guidance on addressing school-related gender-based violence,”** developed by UNESCO, provides key information to governments on tackling this issue.
- Many initiatives are supported worldwide, such as the **“Weaving Life Project”** and **“Tecendo o Amanhã,”** implemented by Instituto Proeza in Brazil to generate income and transform the reality of women in vulnerable situations.



SPEAKER

Katia Ferreira

Director, Instituto Proeza

Instituto Proeza supports children, adolescents and women who are victims of violence and in situations of social vulnerability

PANEL 2

UNESCO'S VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF THE BPfA

There is a growing backlash against women's and girls' rights worldwide, and one of the clearest examples is the situation in Afghanistan, where over 70 decrees have severely restricted their rights and access to education.

Building Women's and Girls' Resilience

- In Afghanistan, UNESCO's literacy programmes have reached **over 55,000 learners**, primarily girls, ensuring educational continuity despite restrictive policies.
- **Radio Begum**, the only women-run radio station in Afghanistan, had been broadcasting educational and empowerment content, reaching up to 600,000 listeners across 15 provinces before its suspension, disrupting its vital role in the country..
- Resilience strategies include vocational training, mentorship programmes, and digital learning platforms to empower women in crisis zones.
- UNESCO's recent reports emphasize resilience-building as integral to addressing interconnected global challenges, including environmental degradation, economic shocks, and social upheavals.

SPEAKER

Hamida Aman

Director, Begum Organization for Women

Women and girls resilience amidst adversity in Afghanistan

Recommendations for the review of Chapter J of the BPfA

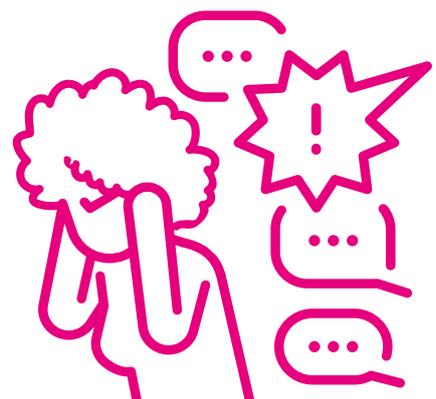
- Women remain underrepresented in the media sector. UNESCO is working to empower women in leadership positions, advance gender equality in newsrooms and is exploring the impact of AI technologies on the representation of women in the media.
- We are faced with new threats to the achievement of gender equality, such as online gender-based violence and the reinforcement of regressive stereotypes within AI systems with 44% of AI systems displaying bias. UNESCO is working on protective measures and policy reforms.
- Women journalists, content creators and activists face disproportionate threats in the digital space. UNESCO advocates for safe media environments where women's voices are amplified and valued in the digital age.
- As 22% of AI professionals are women, UNESCO emphasizes the need for ethical AI development and increased women representation in tech.

SPEAKER

Therese Patricia San Diego Torres

President, Asian Institute of Journalism and Communication (AIJC), Philippines

Recommendations for the review of Chapter J of the BPfA



Leveraging Culture for Women's Empowerment

- The **Pact for the Future** recognizes culture as a crucial component of sustainable development, influencing UNESCO's cultural policies.
- The **Stories x Women program** and **The Creator Labs** enhance the visibility of women artists, supporting animation, digital media, and creative industries.
- UNESCO partners with Women in Animation to offer mentorship, training, and career development for women in the animation sector, particularly in underrepresented regions.
- Through **cultural heritage preservation**, UNESCO highlights and supports the contributions of indigenous women, their creative works and knowledge systems.

SPEAKER

Deepa Chipalu Joshi

Co-CEO, Incessant Rain Studios, and Special adviser to Women in Animation Nepal

Strengthen women's and girls' empowerment in the animation film sector

Shaping Ethical Neurotechnology for Equality

- UNESCO leads global discussions on ethical neuro-technology, ensuring women's perspectives are integrated into the development of human-computer interactions.
- The Ad Hoc Expert Group on Neurotechnology Ethics prioritizes women's needs and opportunities in its recommendations, **addressing mental privacy, autonomy, and bias**.
- This effort aims to balance rapid advancements in neurotechnology with ethical considerations, **safeguarding human dignity and rights** while ensuring that the benefits of these technologies are accessible to all, including women and girls.

SPEAKER

Nita Farhany

Professor of Law & Philosophy, Duke Law School

Neurotechnology, challenges and opportunities for women and girls





CSW69 SIDE EVENT



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United Nations
Educational, Scientific
and Cultural Organization



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