

Policy Paper



South and South-West Asia: An Analysis of the Beijing+25 review reports

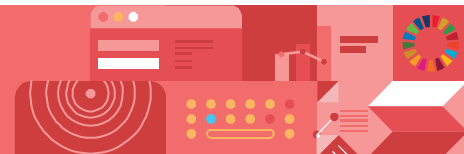
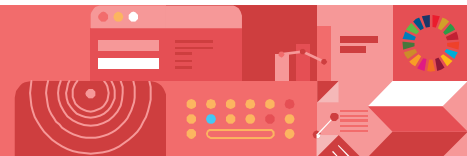


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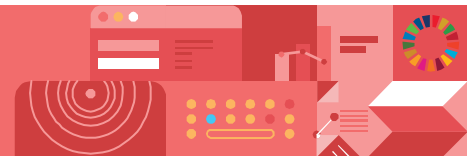
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Acknowledgements:

This paper was prepared by Maria Mathew, Social Affairs Consultant, under the guidance of Cai Cai, Chief, Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Section, Social Development Division of ESCAP. Valuable inputs and comments were received from Channe Lindstrom Oguzhan and Farzana Sharmin. ESCAP interns Laura Euller and Mariam Schiebe provided valuable research work and inputs.



Abbreviations and Acronyms:

ATIP: Anti Trafficking in Person
DAM: Department of Agriculture and Marketing
GBV: Gender Based Violence
GRB: Gender-responsive Budgeting
LGU: Local Government Units
MISP: Minimum Initial Service Package
NAPVAW: National Action Plan on Violence Against Women
NCWC: National Commission on Women and Children
SME: Small and Medium Enterprises
SOE: State Owned Enterprises
SOP: Standard Operating Procedure
SRH: Sexual and Reproductive health
STEM: Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
TVET: Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UEC: Union Election Commission
VAWG: Violence against Women and Girls
WPS: Women, Peace and Security



Introduction

The world is in the throes of the COVID-19 pandemic. Women health workers are at the forefront of the health response to the crisis. With lockdowns and curfews implemented in several parts of the world, the incidence of violence against women and girls has increased. Women are over-represented in sectors hardest hit by the outbreak such as manufacturing, garment, tourism, and hospitality sectors. Lastly, but most importantly, the burden of extra care work and domestic chores in light of the pandemic falls on the shoulders of an already over-burdened womenfolk. In short, the pandemic has exacerbated gender inequalities and discriminatory social norms that exist in our society.

The COVID-19 crisis is a wake-up call for our planet. It is relevant that we introspect our policies and deal with the social, economic, and environmental dimensions of development in an integrated manner. The Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development are critical resources that member States could use to move forward without leaving anyone behind. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – with its commitment to leave no one behind – and the Beijing Platform – with its wide and far reaching scope – could together forge a more equal, inclusive planet. The synergies need to be harnessed to create a more gender-equal Asia and the Pacific.

The Asia-Pacific Beijing+25 Review

In 1995, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action was adopted and subsequently endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly. Every five years since 1995, progress in achieving the strategic objectives of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action is reviewed by the Commission on the Status of Women. The fifth review marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. In its resolution 2018/8, the Economic and Social Council called upon all States to undertake national-level reviews of the progress made and challenges encountered in the implementation of the Platform for Action. Additionally, the resolution encouraged “regional commissions to undertake regional reviews so that the outcomes of intergovernmental processes at the regional level can feed into the 2020 review”.

In accordance with this mandate, ESCAP, in cooperation with UN Women and with the support of the Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism Thematic Working Group on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (RCM-TWG-GEEW), undertook in 2019 a [regional review](#) of progress in implementing the Platform for Action in Asia and the Pacific. Out of its 49 member States and 9 associate members, ESCAP received 45 reports. The analytical review encompassed ESCAP member States geographically located in the Asia-Pacific region.

The 25-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in 2020 was the first time that the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action was reviewed with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development fully in place. The Beijing+25 review harnesses the synergies between the Declaration and Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda to consolidate efforts to accelerate the achievement of key international commitments on gender equality.

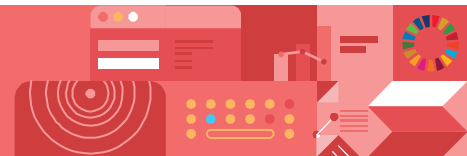
The 12 critical areas of concern of the Platform for Action have been clustered into six overarching themes that highlight the alignment of the two frameworks (see table 1): inclusive development, shared prosperity, and decent work; poverty eradication, social protection and social services; freedom from violence, stigma and stereotypes; participation, accountability and gender-responsive institutions; peaceful and inclusive societies; and environmental conservation, climate action, and resilience-building. In addition, member States have reported on their key priorities, achievements, and challenges with regard to gender equality; national institutions, processes and partnerships; and data and statistics for advancing the empowerment of women and girls in the region.

The present document contains a summary of the identified achievements, challenges, and key actions taken by the ESCAP members and associate members of the South and South West Asia sub-region to advance gender equality and women's empowerment. The countries that have submitted their national review reports¹, and are therefore included in this report, are Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Iran, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Turkey. Sri Lanka has submitted its national review report. Furthermore, the key priority areas for action for countries in the region for the next five years are identified, with a view to accelerate the achievement of gender equality in the region of progress in implementing the Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda.

Table 1 Linkages between the Beijing+25 Review, the Beijing Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda

Beijing +25 Clusters	Critical Areas of Concern	Sustainable Development Goals
<i>Inclusive development, shared prosperity, and decent work</i>	A. Women and poverty F. Women and the economy I. Human rights of women L. The girl child	SDGs 1, 2, 5, 8, 9 and 17
<i>Poverty eradication, social protection, and social services</i>	A. Women and poverty B. Education and training of women C. Women and health I. Human rights of women L. The girl child	SDGs 1,2, 3, 4 and 5
<i>Freedom from violence, stigma, and stereotypes</i>	D. Violence against women I. Human rights of women J. Women and the media L. The girl child	SDG 5

¹ For the national review reports, see: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw64-2020/preparations> . (accessed 27/10/2020). Unless otherwise specified, all information reported in this document has been taken from the respective national review reports submitted by member States for the Beijing+25 Review.



<i>Participation, accountability, and gender-responsive institutions</i>	G. Women in power and decision-making H. Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women I. Human rights of women J. Women and the media L. The girl child	SDGs 5, 16 and 17
<i>Peaceful and inclusive societies</i>	E. Women and armed conflict I. Human rights of women L. The girl child	SDGs 5, 10, 16, 17
<i>Environmental conservation, protection and rehabilitation</i>	K. Women and the environment I. Human rights of women L. The girl child	SDGs 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, 14, 15 and 17

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