

## **CEDAW Submission to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development 2024**

### **“Empowering Equality: CEDAW's Call to Rebuild Differently for a Sustainable Future”**

The efficacy of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is inextricably linked to a renewed perspective on Women's Rights and equality. A developmental strategy devoid of prioritized and strategically incorporated gender equality is inherently unsustainable. Harnessing women's leadership across all economic and political strata represents the most potent resource for fostering efficiency, legitimacy, and economic dynamism in the pursuit of a just and equitable global milieu.

The repercussions of the Covid-19 pandemic and other systemic disruptions underscore the vulnerability of women's rights. Despite assuming a prominent role in crisis responses, women have witnessed a general erosion of their rights, heightened economic precariousness, substantial income contractions, and an escalation in gender-based violence.

In the broader context, parity and equality manifest as capricious, slow-to-evolve, and at times regressive elements in a world demanding their comprehensive realization. Rebuilding predicated on equality as a determinative principle stands as an imperative, necessitating a more ambitious approach to foster developmental benefits.

The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) advocates for a paradigmatic shift, urging a 'REBUILD DIFFERENTLY' approach that accentuates the imperative acceleration of gender equality and parity within public policies. The global non-realization of equality is not merely a human rights transgression but also a systemic hindrance to the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals, notably Goals 1 and 16, addressing poverty and conflict prevention.

CEDAW, functioning as a universal instrument effectuating the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, has played a decisive role in incorporating gender equality into the SDGs, both specifically (SDG 5) and across the spectrum. Acknowledging that no SDG can prosper without a paradigm shift in gender equality, CEDAW has incorporated the 2030 Agenda into its mandate through diverse mechanisms.

Despite states making strides in acknowledging the status of women and gender equality as fundamental rights and positive developmental catalysts, global progress toward equality remains non-linear. Merely 15.4 percent of SDG 5 indicators are on track, and the representation of women in global parliaments stands at 26 percent. Additionally, 178 countries maintain legal impediments to equal opportunities in economic life.

A 'sursaut' (surge) from the international community is imperative. The COVID-19 crisis has spotlighted the insufficient consolidation of women's rights globally, and few countries recognize equality as a force for peace, economic development, and conflict prevention. Escalating violence, meager representation of women in parliaments, and systemic transformations necessitate not only 'rebuilding better' but also 'rebuilding differently.'

CEDAW's recommendations advocate for a paradigm shift predicated on equality as a catalyst for positive change, not confined to SDG 5 but extending to all SDGs. The Committee underscores the urgency of a universal resurgence in equality to positively expedite the realization of the 2030 Agenda. This entails enhancing CEDAW's role as a treaty body with augmented responsibilities, status, and means of action.

The recommendations further call for the universal reaffirmation of equality as a fundamental right and a success factor for the SDGs. They encompass the delineation of new inclusive and gender-balanced

governance structures, the consolidation of constitutional and legislative rights established by CEDAW, the systemic deployment of temporary special measures, the strategic prioritization of gender equality in public policies, and the holistic implementation of all facets of CEDAW as an operational roadmap for requisite change.

CEDAW advocates for a momentous stride toward equality, particularly gender parity, in the priorities of states and the multilateral system. The strategic impact of this perspective on the world's evolution will be deliberated upon at the United Nations Summit for the Future in September 2024.

The proposal posits the creation of a mechanism strengthening the convergence between CEDAW and the SDGs for the requisite acceleration. Establishing a special mechanism ensuring the alignment of CEDAW's implementation with the challenges of the 2030 Agenda would constitute an apt and effective response. This involves devising an approach based on the interaction between CEDAW and the 2030 Agenda to ascertain crucial priorities for the necessary paradigm shift, cognizant of the limitations of the prevailing continuum.