

Gender Equality Forum, Mexico

29-31 March 2021

The Gender Equality Forum is a civil society-centered, global gathering for gender equality convened by UN Women and co-hosted by the governments of Mexico and France in partnership with youth and civil society. The Forum in Paris, France, from 30 June to 2 July, will launch a series of concrete, ambitious and transformative actions to achieve immediate and irreversible progress towards gender equality.

The Generation Equality Forum concluded with the unveiling of an Action Coalition blueprint and of new catalytic commitments for gender equality. These set the stage to pass the Forum's torch to its next step in Paris on 30 June, which will be a major commitment-making moment. Youth and civil society leaders also launched a 2026 vision and a common feminist pathway. This progress was made possible by a vibrant intergenerational coalition of actors representing governments, civil society, feminist and youth organizations, the private sector, philanthropy, and international organizations.

The Forum in Mexico City, 29-31 March, engaged an estimated 10 000 people, including over 250 speakers from 85 countries to reinvigorate action and movements for gender equality. Reflecting the spirit to involve a new generation, nearly half of the participants were under 30 years old. The meeting took place amid growing concerns that COVID-19 has exacerbated a 'gender equality crisis', making action and investment in women's rights critical. A quarter century after the landmark Beijing Conference and Platform for Action, the Forum aimed to re-ignite efforts for full implementation.

Closing the Forum for the Government of Mexico, the co-host of the Forum, Mr. Marcelo Ebrad, Secretary for Foreign Affairs of Mexico, shared his vision of feminism as a guide for change in the face of the great inequalities that the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated. "Feminism maintains an unrepentant, unresolved optimism. It is dissatisfaction with the situation as it is and how it has been, and it is a permanent aspiration to change everything, or almost everything... The path it lays before us is to take the impulse that feminism leads to.... To transform our societies, and never abandon optimism", he said.

The closing day also showcased catalytic commitments designed to inspire and mobilize the larger commitment-making efforts that will take center-stage at the Paris event:

- Mexico's National Institute for Women (INMUJERES) in partnership with UN Women launched an initiative for an Alliance for Care Work, in a bold effort to confront the care burden that impedes women's economic opportunity, and which has risen due to the pandemic.
- Women Moving Millions, a global network of individual philanthropists, made a commitment to raise USD 100 Million by Paris to support the entirety of the Action Coalition agenda?
- A strategic partnership between Ford Foundation, the Equality Fund and the Government of Canada announced a commitment highlighting the importance of feminist funding in achieving gender equality including: a USD 15 Million commitment from Ford Foundation to the Equality Fund; plans to initiate a multi-stakeholder Global Alliance for Sustainable Feminist Movements, and a USD 10 Million commitment from Canada to the UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women.

In the context of the Generation Equality Forum, the Government of Mexico also launched the Group of Friends of Gender Equality, integrated by 20 Member States who committed to coordinate efforts and promote actions on different multilateral area in favor of gender equality.

Martine Gayon

UN Representative, New York

