



REFLECT. REALIZE. RESPOND.

Rising to New Challenges:
Accelerating Gender Parity
in Times of Crisis and Beyond

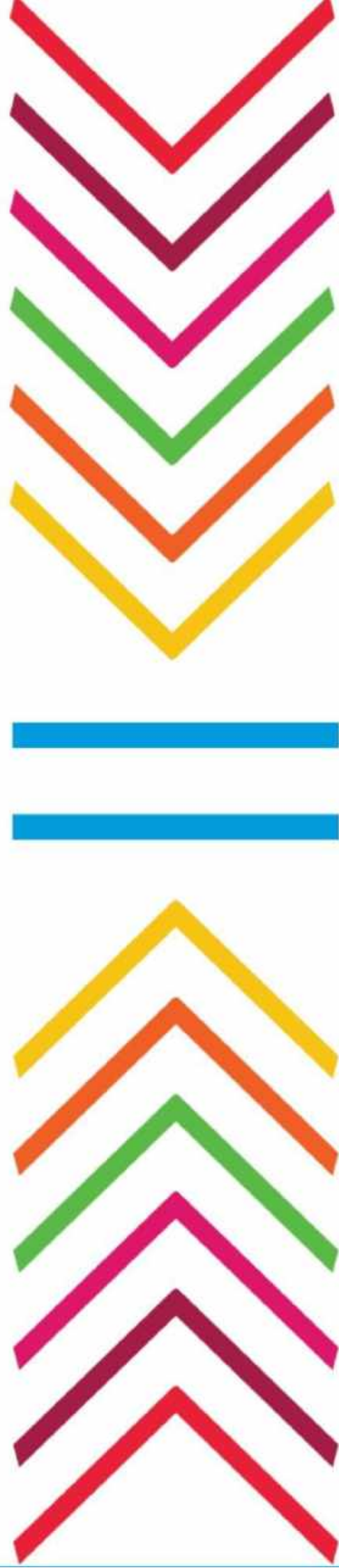
Global Annual Meeting of Gender Focal
Points and Focal Points for Women
October 5-7, 2020
@Zoom



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01 INTRODUCTION

Background

The Office of the Focal Point for Women in the UN System at UN Women (hereafter the Office) is mandated to monitor and report on the status of women in the United Nations system, serving as the chief advocate for monitoring and improving the status of women across the system and assisting the UN Secretary-General in achieving the General Assembly mandated goal of 50:50 gender parity at all levels in the UN system.

The Office provides capacity-building, guidance and updates on General Assembly mandates, organizational policies and emerging issues and facilitates networking opportunities for the network of Gender Focal Points. The Office supports the implementation of the UN Secretary-General's *System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity* through leading and coordinating the network of nearly 400 Gender Focal Points across the United Nations.

The Gender Focal Points and their alternates are appointed in each department, office, regional commission and mission, and are vital 'agents of change' to accelerate the efforts to reach the goal of gender parity by 2028. They work together with the UN leadership across the world for the achievement of gender equality and gender parity. Gender Focal Points act as advocates and liaison with the leadership to address systemic issues and changes to processes that have demonstrated to impact disproportionately personnel based on their gender.

Gender Focal Points promote greater awareness on gender parity and equality. They also provide information to staff on policies relevant to advancing gender equality in the workplace and on creation of enabling working environments, such as on issues related to standards of conduct, flexible working arrangements and family friendly policies. Furthermore, they initiate and support training or capacity-building possibilities on gender sensitivity, work/life balance and career path strategies. They also provide information on avenues to address situations of gender-based workplace concerns, including but not limited to harassment, sexual harassment, discrimination and/or abuse of power.

The Office organized **the Global Annual Gender Focal Point Meeting** on 5-7 October 2020: *"Reflect. Realize. Respond. Rising to New Challenges: Accelerating Gender Parity in Times of Crisis and Beyond"*. The annual meeting was conducted online for the first time, with 163 participants.



The Office of the Focal Point for Women together with the Executive Director of UN Women, Dr. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka

The Office of the Focal Point for Women in the UN System

Ms. Katja Pehrman, Senior Advisor and Focal Point for Women in the UN System
Ms. Samantha Ronda, Executive Associate
Ms. Shinobu Sasaki, Gender Parity Specialist
Ms. Minna Nurminen, Gender Parity Analyst
Mr. David Gawellek, Gender Parity Consultant
Ms. Hannah Phillips, Gender Parity Consultant



The Office supports the role of the Focal Points for Women and Gender Focal Points (hereafter *Gender Focal Points*)¹ as changemakers for advancing gender parity and transforming the organizational culture of the United Nations. In this regard, the Office provides guidance and expertise, amongst others, on the implementation of *the Enabling Environment Guidelines for the UN system* and *the Field-specific Enabling Environment Guidelines*.

In 2020, the Office has organized several capacity building sessions for the Gender Focal Points to share and exchange information as well as to showcase good examples to accelerate action to reach parity, including:

- A series to build Gender Focal Points' capacities to appropriately respond to harassment, including sexual harassment, discrimination and abuse of authority;
- Sessions on Inclusive Vacancy Announcements in support of gender parity and inclusion;
- Webinars on how to work effectively from home during COVID-19;
- Workshop on how to influence others as Gender Focal Points;
- Event on LGBTQI+ equality to create an inclusive workplace; and
- Dialogue with the International Gender Champions on Parental Leave Policies.

The Office has also developed several communication products, including:

- Ten ways to Create an Enabling Environment during COVID-19; Top tips to Foster Inclusivity Online During COVID-19; How to address online sexual harassment during COVID-19;
- Reference support document to help Gender Focal Points to identify appropriate support mechanisms in cases of misconduct;
- Guidance on mentoring as a part of creating an enabling environment.
- Top Tips for Inclusive Vacancy Announcements in support of gender parity;
- Inclusive and gender-sensitive model template for Exit Surveys; and
- Video messages from UN leadership underlining the importance of reaching gender parity and creating enabling working environments.

The Focal Point for Women has also continued to represent the Gender Focal Points in *the Chief Executives Board (CEB) Task Force on Addressing Sexual Harassment within the Organizations of the UN system* to drive joint action in key priority areas. The Office also contributes to *the Secretary-General's Working Group on Emergency Measures* to create recommendations and good examples on how to attract and retain more women in the field and peacekeeping missions.

¹ Please note that "Gender Focal Points" here also encompasses "Focal Points for Women". These terms are synonymous. The term "Focal Points for Women" is used by the UN Secretariat, and is guided by the Secretary-General's (ST/SGB/2008/12) "Departmental focal points for women in the Secretariat." The term "Gender Focal Point" is used by the remainder of the UN system.