



Inter-Parliamentary Union  
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Forum of Women Parliamentarians  
Item 6

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4 November 2021

## Panel discussion: *Strategies for gender-responsive law making*

**Friday, 26 November 2021, 14:30–16:30**  
**Hall Madrid, 1st floor, Palacio Municipal (IFEMA)**

In 1979, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) laid out a blueprint for women's rights, including commitments to embody the principle of equality of men and women in law and in practice. In the years since, the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development have built on these commitments and reinforced the global drive to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women.

And yet, many countries around the world still have laws that discriminate against women due to the fact that laws are traditionally drawn up by men without consideration for the voices, perspectives and priorities of women and girls in the design and implementation of laws. Gaps in laws can be closed through reforms that will actively promote equal rights for all.

While the COVID-19 pandemic has deepened pre-existing gender inequalities and revealed the fragility of measures implemented to combat them – inequalities in laws included – policymakers around the world have also recognized that implementing fundamental, transformative reform is possible if there is a serious political will to do so combined with public support for such reform.

Parliaments are key to ensuring that national laws guarantee gender equality in practice. To achieve that, parliamentarians must not only adopt rights-affirming laws that protect and benefit all women and girls but also analyse the differentiated impact of legislation on women and girls. While parliaments' capacities to carry out this work must be strengthened, building alliances across sectors and across parties is equally important.

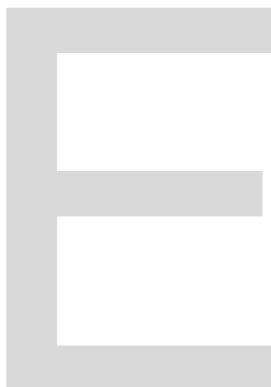
In 2021, the IPU and UN Women will launch a handbook for parliamentarians on gender-responsive law making. Participants at the Forum of Women Parliamentarians will be presented with the main takeaways of the handbook and have an opportunity to discuss openly their national experiences and lessons learned.

Parliamentarians attending the Forum will be invited to share their concrete experiences in three specific strategic areas:

1. *Gender-responsive legal reform, its benefits and related challenges*
2. *Partnerships needed to conduct gender-responsive legal reform*
3. *Mechanisms and capacities for action in parliament.*

Following a presentation of the IPU-UN Women handbook, panellists will be invited to introduce the strategic areas. The moderator will then give the floor to participants wishing to contribute examples under each of above-mentioned areas. Interventions from the floor will be limited to two minutes each.

Participants are invited to indicate in advance by filling in the table below, under which series of questions they would like to contribute their experiences, stories, and views.



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Strategic area	Series	Questions	Participant's name	Participant's title	Country
1. Gender-responsive legal reform, its benefits and related challenges	<b>The costs of discrimination versus the benefits of gender-responsive legislation</b>	<p>Give one example of the kind of impact that gender discrimination in your national laws has had on women and girls in your country.</p> <p>Give examples of benefits a specific gender equality law or legal reform has brought to your country.</p>			
	<b>Are there areas of gender-responsive legislation that can be more easily reformed than other areas?</b>	<p>In your view, which laws still need to be reformed in your country?</p> <p>Are there areas of legislation on gender equality that are still taboo?</p> <p>Give a concrete example of an action you or your parliament have taken to build a favourable environment for parliamentary action on gender equality, women's rights or women's empowerment.</p>			
2. Partnerships needed to conduct gender-responsive legal reform	<b>Who do you need on board for gender-responsive law-making?</b>	<p>Share an example of when you or your parliament have engaged civil society groups or specific groups of women and girls in the work of your parliament or one of its committees or caucuses.</p> <p>Share a story on how male MPs have engaged in gender-responsive legal reform and the kind of impact this engagement has had.</p> <p>Share a story on how women leaders from different sectors came together to promote gender-responsive legal reform.</p>			
3. Mechanisms and capacities for action in parliament	<b>Is parliament equipped to be a champion of gender equality?</b>	<p>In your view and experience, what does it take to have a powerful and impactful parliamentary committee on gender equality?</p> <p>Do you or your parliament conduct gender assessments of legislation? If yes, what are the tools that you use?</p> <p>Give an example of how you or your parliament oversee implementation of gender-equality related legislation.</p>			

Participants are kindly requested to register and indicate under which strategic area they wish to contribute by 24 November by writing to [mgn@ipu.org](mailto:mgn@ipu.org) or signing up on the [online form](#).

Requests for the floor will be possible on the day of the Forum. However, such speaking slots will only be attributed if time allows.