

Economic and Social Commission for
Western Asia (ESCWA)

Arab Parliaments Dialogue on the Regional Review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action Thirty Years After its Adoption (BPfA+30)

29 – 30 May 2024
Kempinski Hotel – Amman, Jordan



Shared Prosperity Dignified Life



Economic and Social Commission for
Western Asia (ESCWA)

Session One: Comprehensive Review of BPfA+30

Review of the BPfA and its Interlinkage with the 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Dr. Salma Al-Nims

Senior Social Affairs Officer, Gender Justice, Population and Inclusive Development Cluster,
ESCWA



Shared Prosperity Dignified Life



The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA)

- The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action was adopted in 1995 at the Fourth World Conference on Women and reaffirmed at the twenty-third special session of the United Nations General Assembly held in 2000.
- The Beijing Platform for Action covers 12 critical areas of concern and 52 strategic objectives.
- It serves as a frame of reference for analyzing the status of women around the world and evaluating the efforts made by countries to achieve gender equality.
- It calls on governments, the international community, civil society and the private sector to take strategic action in areas of critical concern, and conduct the relevant progress reviews every five years.

Women and the environment



Institutional mechanisms



Women and poverty



Violence against women



Women and armed conflict



Women in power and decision-making



The girl child



Human rights of women



Women and health



Women and the economy



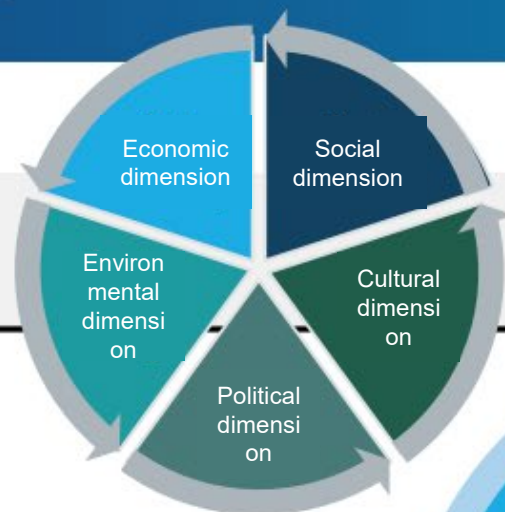
Education and training of women



Women and the media



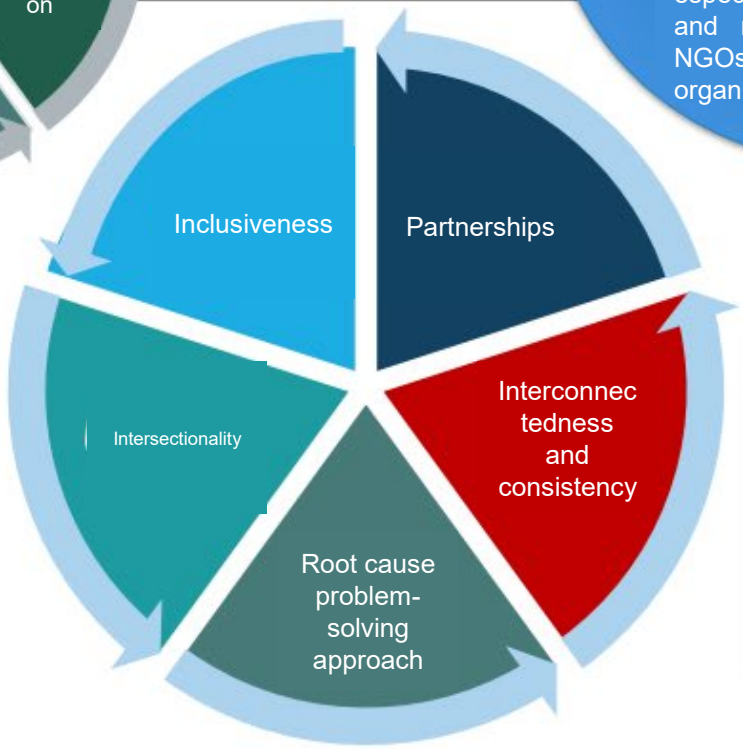
The Beijing Platform for Action's Underlying Philosophy



Establishing partnerships to ensure effective implementation

- Intragovernmental (within the same government)
- Intergovernmental (between several governments)
- International community
- Private sector
- Civil society organizations, especially women's groups and networks, as well as NGOs and community-based organizations

The BPfA is intended to improve the situation of all women, paying special attention to groups that are the most disadvantaged (elderly women, female children, refugee women, migrant women, women with disabilities, etc.)



The BPfA calls for analyzing the main structures of gender inequality and addressing its root causes.

According to the Platform, women's equal access to and participation in health care, education, work, and political life is essential for their empowerment.

International human rights and development frameworks to/with which the BPfA is linked and synergized philosophically and historically

The BPfA serves as a frame of reference for analyzing the status of women around the world and evaluating the efforts made by countries to advance it. It is linked to:

- The three conferences on women that preceded the fourth one held in Beijing, and other various international conferences on human rights
- International Human Rights Law
- International humanitarian law
- Resolutions of the United Nations Agencies
- The Women, Peace and Security (“WPS”) Agenda
- International Labour Organization (ILO) Conventions



International human rights and development frameworks to/with which the BPfA is linked and synergized philosophically and historically



UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security (and subsequent resolutions)

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women

The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)

The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights



The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

- The 2030 Agenda (the Agenda for the year 2030) was adopted in 2015 by the Member States of the UN.
- The 2030 Agenda includes 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 231 indicators.
- It constitutes a universal framework that guides global and national development efforts and provides new options and opportunities to bridge the gap between human rights and development.
- The SDGs are global (they include all countries), transformative (people-centered, human rights-based, earth-centered), and universal (apply to everyone, without exception and without discrimination based on country, or peoples).
- Equality is at the heart of SDGs.

Development will only be sustainable if its benefits accrue equally to both women and men; and women's rights will only become a reality if they are part of broader efforts to protect the planet and ensure that all people can live with respect and dignity.



A cross-cutting issue

A stand-alone issue

The 2030 Agenda: A Human Rights-based Approach to Development

Agenda Declaration: Introduction

- Combat inequalities within and among countries.
- Build peaceful, just and inclusive societies.
- Protect human rights and promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

Agenda's Vision

- A world of universal respect for human rights and human dignity, the rule of law, justice, equality and non-discrimination.
- A world of respect for race, ethnicity and cultural diversity.
- A just, equitable, tolerant, open and socially inclusive world in which the needs of the most vulnerable are met.

Agenda's Shared Principles and Commitments

- The Agenda is guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. It is grounded in and informed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, international human rights treaties, and other instruments such as the Declaration on the Right to Development.

Informed by the Declaration on the Right to Development

- According to this Declaration, the right to development is essential for creating an enabling environment that promotes the achievement of SDGs.

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

- They are both ethical commitments that should be honored by governments and require political will to be implemented. They are considered commitments since they are based on principles and objectives set out in the provisions of treaties that are binding on the States parties to them.
- They both require the adoption of an extensive consultation mechanism to ensure the availability of information and ownership of outputs, programs and action plans at the national level.
- They both need to be translated into time-bound action plans and programs that include measurable indicators. Indicators, in turn, are used to develop integrated monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plans.
- They both require human and financial resources to ensure their implementation.
- They are both cumulative processes that build on the progress made and aim to overcome challenges through setting consensus-driven priorities.

Interlinkage between Critical Areas of Concern and SDGs

G. Women in power and decision-making



5-1 End all forms of discrimination against women and girls

5-5 Ensure women's full and effective participation at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life



8-3 Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, and entrepreneurship.



10-2 Promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all.

10-3 Ensure equal opportunity by promoting appropriate laws, policies and practices in this regard.



16-B Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws.

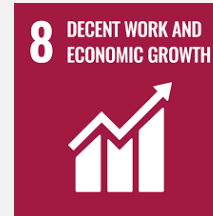
D. Violence against women



5-2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.

5-3 Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation.

5-4 Recognize paid and unpaid care and domestic work through the promotion of shared responsibility within the household.



8-7 Eradicate forced labour and human trafficking.

8-8 Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers.



10-7 Facilitate orderly and safe migration and mobility of people.

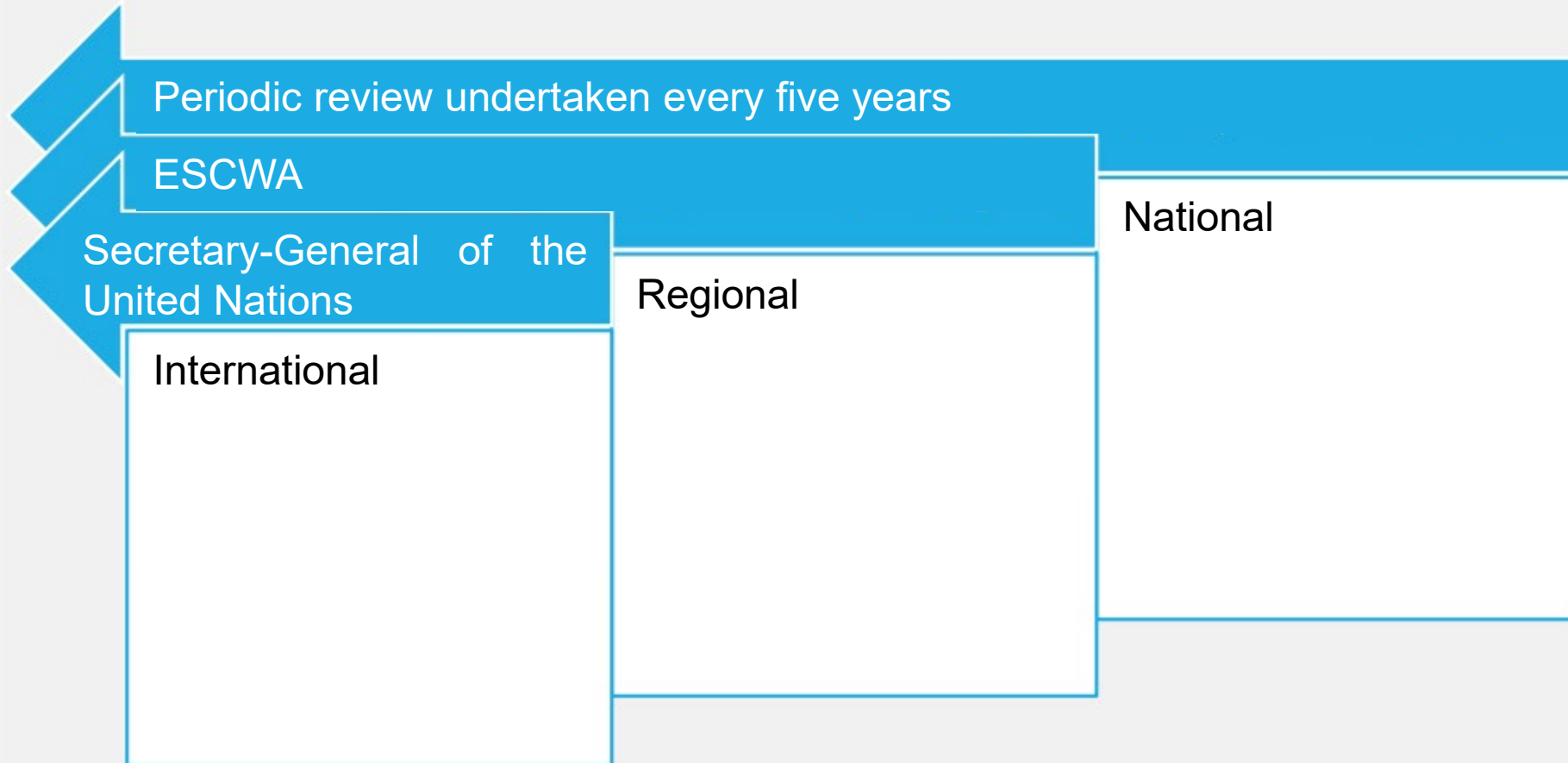


16-2 End abuse, exploitation, and human trafficking.

Comprehensive review on the implementation of BPfA+30

- The United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) requested, in its Resolution E/RES/2022/5, all member States to undertake the sixth comprehensive national-level reviews of the progress made and challenges encountered with regards to the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (30 years after its adoption).
- The Resolution also requested the UN regional commissions, including the ESCWA, to undertake regional reviews so that their outcomes can feed into and be aligned with the global 2025 review.
- The review process, conducted in a participatory manner with national governments and multi-stakeholders, produces an outcome document that reinforces the global commitment to the empowerment of women and girls and sets priorities for action for the next five years.

Review Path



Comprehensive review on the implementation of BPfA+30

- According to the Commission on the Status of Women's Programme of Work, the findings of the national and regional review reports delivered by the regional commissions shall be incorporated in the final report to be submitted to Secretary-General of the United Nations.
- The international community will also meet at the sixty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women in March 2025 to present the most important advances in the implementation of the BPfA and the obstacles faced by States.
- The UN General Assembly is also expected to convene a one-day high-level meeting to mark the anniversary and accelerate the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.

Guidance Note for Comprehensive National-level Reviews

- The present Guidance note for comprehensive national-level reviews was prepared by UN-Women in collaboration with the five Regional Commissions, including ESCWA.
- The Guidance Note is addressed to all countries of the world, and they may adapt it and localize it in any way they wish.
- In the Guidance Note's introduction, it is emphasized that this anniversary should be used as the occasion to bring a young generation of gender equality advocates and those who remain on the sidelines into the centre of a whole-of-government, whole-of-society effort. By joining forces, government together with society has the capacity to overcome and eradicate the root causes of gender inequality and chart a path forward for genuine, substantive equality.
- This anniversary is also an opportunity to strengthen gender-responsive action and implementation of other global commitments, such as those under Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent resolutions on women, peace and security; the Paris agreement on climate change (2015); and the regional commitments to promote gender equality and the rights of women and girls, among others.

The Guidance Note for Comprehensive National-level Reviews

According to the Guidance Note, governments should undertake national-level reviews, ensuring:

- The national-level review process should be inclusive, participatory, transparent and thorough, based on evidence, while also producing tangible lessons and solutions, which should be followed by concrete action and collaboration towards the implementation of the BPfA and the SDGs.
- Collaboration and alignment with other existing institutional arrangements, in particular those responsible for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development or preparation of relevant reports.
- Additionally, sources of information should include **periodic reports submitted to treaty bodies**, and **Voluntary National Reviews** (under the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**).



Multi-stakeholder participation and contributions

Rights holders, UN agencies, and regional commissions

Civil Society Organizations including women's organizations;

Women human rights defenders;

National human rights institutions;

Organizations representing women and girls subject to multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination;

Other representative organizations such as trade unions, women's self-help organizations, youth groups, faith-based organizations, and professional organizations;

The private sector, including employers' organizations;

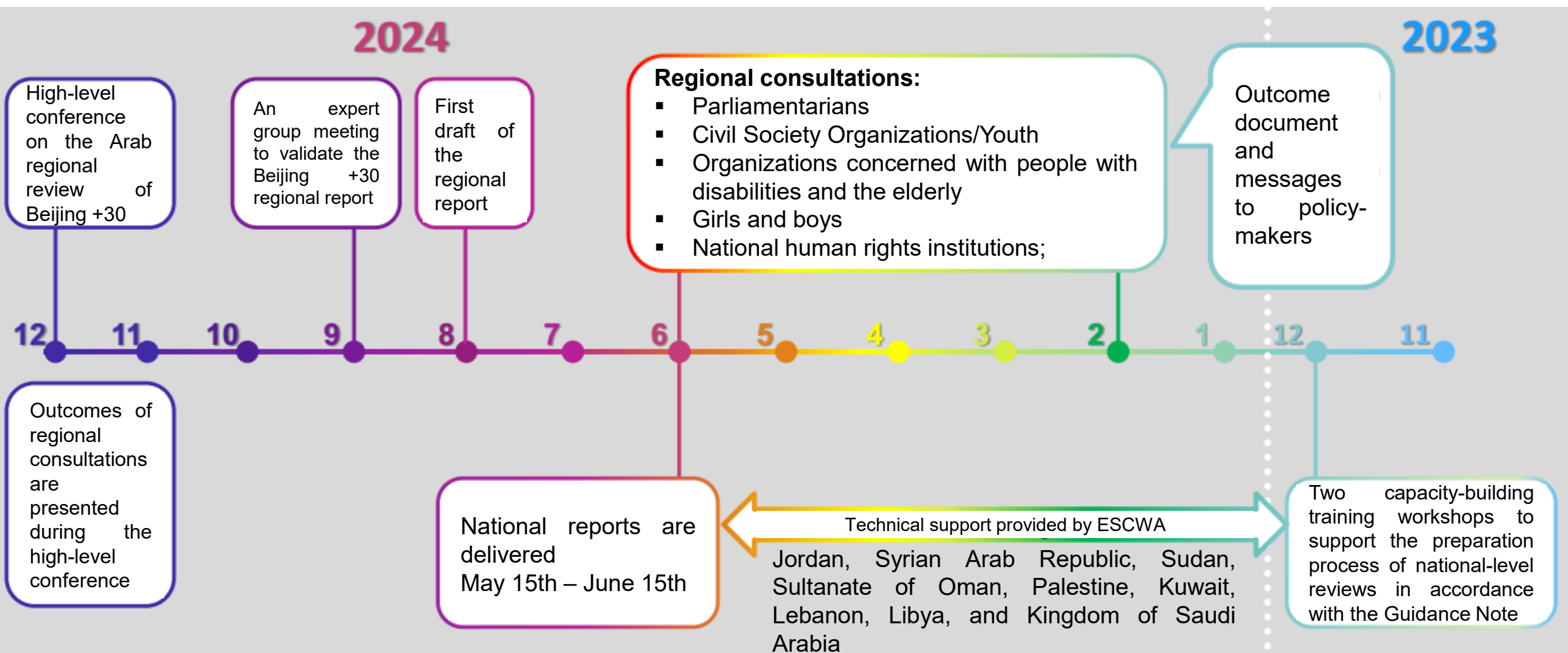
The Academia; and

The media.

Progress across the 12 critical areas of concern

Dimensions	Inclusive development, shared prosperity and decent work	Poverty eradication, social protection, and social services	Freedom from violence, stigma and stereotypes
Critical Areas of Concern	A. Women and poverty F. Women and the economy I. Human rights of women L. The girl-child	A. Women and poverty B. Education and training of women C. Women and health I. Human rights of women L. The girl-child	D. Violence against women I. Human rights of women J. Women and the media L. The girl-child
Dimensions	Participation, accountability, and gender-responsive institutions	Peaceful and inclusive societies	Environmental conservation, protection, and rehabilitation
Critical Areas of Concern	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	E. Women and armed conflict I. Human rights of women L. The girl-child	I. Human rights of women K. Women and the environment L. The girl-child

Timeline for National and Regional Reviews on Implementation of BPfA+30



What can the civil society bring to the table in these areas?

- **Policies, Strategies, Plans and Procedures**
- What are the policies, strategies, plans and procedures adopted within the review pillar?
- Were they implemented? And what is the impact of such implementation on the status of women in this sphere?
- If there was no implementation done, what are the challenges that hurdled the implementation process?
- What is the role of the civil society and the impact of partnerships and alliances in achieving the intended goals?
- **Issues that have not been worked on yet**
- What are the issues that have not been worked on yet?
- Who are the marginalized groups most affected by overlooking these issues? And how has this affected these groups?
- **How have the crises affected this pillar? Covid-19, the war in Ukraine, the conflict in Sudan and women, the war on Gaza.**
- **Identifying a clear priority for the future to work on and developing effective strategies based on the lessons learned in the past five years.**
- **The impact of the counter-narrative to the equality, women and civil society agenda and ways to address it**

General Advice on Civil Society Participation in the National-level Review

- An opportunity for civil society to provide a critical analysis of policies and programmes, their effectiveness, and to suggest alternatives and solutions to remove obstacles.
- It is essential to view this process as an opportunity to have a positive multilateral engagement in the dialogue on the gender equality agenda and with all stakeholders and bodies .
- Which translates into leveraging the national consultations conducted by the government/ the national mechanism, and trying to develop visions for the civil society within the national report (this stage is concluded).
- It is possible to coordinate with governments to start dialogues on the report's pillars and critical areas of concern, which may contribute to enriching the review until March 2025, and thus enriching their contribution to the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), and in the final document.
- National and regional dialogues, national and regional parallel reports, and side sessions on the margins of the (CSW).
- The need to take advantage of media platforms to announce the review process and raise awareness about the issues raised.



Shared Prosperity Dignified Life



United Nations Entity for Gender Equality
and the Empowerment of Women

Thank You