



## WEBINAR REPORT

### HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT APPROACHES, SDG 5: ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWER ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS

#### Introduction

In the lead-up to the 2025 High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development, Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG 5) – *Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls* took center stage as a critical priority. The review of SDG 5 provided a timely opportunity to accelerate efforts to address deeply entrenched structural inequalities and to highlight the urgency of ensuring inclusive leadership worldwide.

With particular attention to target 5.5, which calls for women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making, the webinars underscored both progress and persistent gaps.

Despite notable advances, women remained underrepresented in political leadership, executive positions, and decision-making bodies globally. Discussions emphasized that achieving gender parity required integrated, evidence-based policies to dismantle legal, institutional, and cultural barriers, supported by governance and accountability mechanisms that move commitments from symbolic gestures to structural realities.

To engage diverse audiences and broaden perspectives, a series of three webinars were organized. One in Arabic, one in English and one in Spanish. Each session explored the following key questions:

- What is the High-Level Political Forum, and what was on the agenda for 2025?
- How might the outcomes impact the future of the global gender equality agenda?
- What are the trends in SDG 5, particularly with reference to target 5.5 on leadership and decision-making?
- What lessons have been learned since the adoption of the SDGs?
- How can more diverse voices be brought into global forums?
- How can reporting on indicators be improved at the national level?
- How can policy reflect a holistic and grounded approach to addressing the SDG 5 agenda?

Reports from the other webinars can be accessed [here](#).

The webinar in English was held on 11/07/2025



#### Session Panellists

- **Amanda Sourek**, Outreach and United Nations Liaison at International IDEA
- **Liliana Suchodolska**, Team Lead, Inclusive Data Ecosystems, Paris 21, OECD
- **Bina Maseno**, Executive Director, Badili Africa, Women's Rights Organization.

## Highlights

- Amanda Sourek noted that according to UN reports only 28% of SDGs are on track globally progress has been slow due to conflicts, post-pandemic recovery, and funding shortages.
- Liliana Suchodolska highlighted that gender equality is facing global backlash; and according to UN Women nearly one in four governments report regression on women's rights.
- Bina Maseno mentioned that women's representation in parliaments increased to 27.2% globally, but young women's representation remains under 1%.
- Panellists highlighted the persistent gender data gaps limit accountability: fewer than 30% of countries have adequate SDG 5 data.
- All panellists agreed that grassroots and feminist movements are key data producers but remain under-recognized.
- Financing for development and gender equality is declining; gender-responsive budgeting is critical.
- Inclusion and representation in global forums must go beyond tokenism — accessibility, funding, and shared agenda-setting are essential.
- Emerging issues like AI and digital data governance need gender perspectives to prevent bias and exclusion.

## Challenges Identified

- Shrinking civic space and backlash against women's rights which is contributing to the uneven progress on SDG 5 globally.
- Insufficient financing for gender data and equality initiatives is impacting the global data collection on gender related issues.
- Lack of reliable, disaggregated gender data across most countries coupled with weak coordination between national statistical systems and civil society.
- In many countries there is limited awareness and political will at national levels to act on UN policy commitments.
- A key issue highlighted by Lilian was the underrepresentation of women in technology and AI policymaking spaces.



## Recommendations and Way Forward

- **Accelerate implementation** and accountability move from commitments to measurable, time-bound action on SDG 5 targets.
- **Invest in gender data systems** and strengthen national statistical offices, ensure regular funding, and prioritize disaggregated and intersectional data collection.
- **Adopt gender-responsive budgeting** to align resources with gender equality priorities and track public spending impacts.
- **Enhance collaboration** to build coordinated partnerships between governments, civil society, feminist movements, and local actors to produce and use data effectively.
- **Empower grassroots and youth-led organizations** create funded pathways for their participation in policymaking and global forums.
- **Localize global commitments** translate UN frameworks like Beijing+30 and HLPF declarations into actionable national and subnational policies.
- **Promote inclusive and democratic data ecosystems** recognize community-generated and citizen data as legitimate sources to fill information gaps.
- **Mainstream gender in technology and AI governance** ensure women's participation in digital policy spaces to prevent data bias and exclusion.

The complete webinar can be accessed [here](#).