



BPW International

International Federation of Business & Professional Women

Founded In 1930

BPW International Statement on the Proposed Merger of UN Women and UNFPA

Business and Professional Women (BPW) International recognizes the importance of ongoing United Nations reform aimed at improving efficiency, accountability, coherence and impact. Such reform, however, must strengthen—and never diminish—the United Nations’ capacity to advance gender equality, women’s empowerment and the human rights of women and girls.

BPW International therefore opposes the proposed structural merger of UN Women and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

UN Women and UNFPA have distinct and complementary mandates. UN Women provides essential normative, coordination and operational leadership across the UN system on gender equality and women’s empowerment. UNFPA carries an equally important mandate concerning sexual and reproductive health and rights, population dynamics, demographic data, maternal health and young people. Both institutions require appropriate visibility, specialized expertise, adequate resources and institutional authority.

The evidence currently available does not demonstrate that a structural merger would produce benefits greater than the potential legal, financial, operational and political risks. It could weaken institutional visibility, disrupt country-level delivery, affect funding and specialized expertise, and place two essential mandates under increased political pressure.

BPW International supports enhanced coordination without structural consolidation. Joint programming, shared administrative services, interoperable data systems and coordinated country-level action can improve efficiency while preserving the separate mandates, governance, leadership and institutional identities of both entities.

Any reform must be Member State-led, transparent, inclusive and evidence-based, with meaningful participation by civil society and women-led organizations. It must safeguard the commitments established under CEDAW, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the ICPD Program of Action, the Women, Peace and Security Agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Institutional reform must ultimately be measured not by changes to organizational structures or anticipated administrative savings, but by its tangible impact on the lives, rights, leadership, economic empowerment, safety and well-being of women and girls.

BPW International calls upon United Nations Member States to preserve UN Women and UNFPA as distinct, visible and adequately resourced entities, while pursuing stronger coordination and effective collaboration between them and across the United Nations system.

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The network for business and professional women in 5 continents
with General Consultative Status at ECOSOC/ United Nations

Theme 2024 – 2027: *“Inspire, Innovate, Empower, Transform: Together we shape a sustainable future”*