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GLOBAL GOOD PRACTICES IN ADVANCING GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT IN CONSTITUTIONS



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FOREWORD

Support for constitution-making is part of UNDP's mandate to strengthen effective and democratic governance. Often carrying greater legal and moral weight than other legislation constitutions are where equality and rights are articulated and emboldened. As such, constitutions provide the strongest legal means to protect the fundamental rights and freedoms of women.

Recent global events have underscored the importance of constitutions in the edifice of inclusive democracies and supporting peace building, state building and peaceful political transitions. Countries throughout the world have grappled with how to frame the essential foundations of democratic institutions, values and processes, including checks and balances, the division of powers and individual guarantees. Constitution-building also provides an unparalleled opportunity to shine a spotlight on the importance of gender equality and to provide the legal framework required to ensure that it is enshrined as a fundamental aspect of sustainable human development – a mandate for public policy to proactively pursue the enactment and enjoyment of rights by women.

This publication is designed to support UNDP staff, partners and national stakeholders who wish to advocate for the inclusion of comprehensive constitutional provisions that protect and advance women's human rights and fundamental freedoms. It presents good practices for the advancement of gender equality in constitutional provisions through the articulation of women's political, civil, economic, social and cultural rights. Taking examples from existing constitutions throughout the world, it also shows how gender-inclusive language, temporary special measures, the incorporation and adaptation to the domestic context of human rights treaties and institutional measures can protect and advance women's rights.

Constitutions from all regions of the world have already taken important steps to advance women's rights. And yet, much more remains to be done to realize the rights of all women and men, girls and boys. We hope this publication will support all parties involved in constitution-making to advance gender equality and women's empowerment.



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