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United Nations Entity for Gender Equality  
and the Empowerment of Women



# Gender-responsive law-making

**Handbook for Parliamentarians No. 33**

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Cover photo: Gender-responsive laws can be life changing for women and girls to fully enjoy their rights and fulfil their potential. © Allison Joyce/Getty Images via AFP

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# Glossary

<b>Amendment</b>	The process or act of passing legislation to change the text of an existing law.
<b>Bill</b>	A draft law that has been finalized for consideration by parliament.
<b>Cabinet</b>	Constituted by the most senior ministers of government, sitting together as a collective decision-making body.
<b>Chamber</b>	A generic term used to refer to the members of parliament when they are officially sitting together. Different terms such as “House of Representatives”, “House of the People”, “Senate”, “Lower House” or “Upper House” are used in different parts of the world.
<b>Discriminatory legislation</b>	Laws that operate to give men and women unequal status, rights and privileges in law and in practice.
<b>Enactment</b>	The process or act of passing legislation.
<b>Gender equality</b>	A term that refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women’s and men’s rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men. Gender equality is not a women’s issue but should concern and fully engage men as well as women. Equality between women and men is seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people-centred development. <sup>1</sup>
<b>Government (executive)</b>	Terms used to refer to the group of officials responsible for managing the day-to-day operations of a government. This group includes the head of state, head of government, ministers and the bureaucracy.
<b>Law (legislation)</b>	Terms used interchangeably to refer to a final bill that has been approved by the legislative and executive and that has entered into force.
<b>Parliament</b>	Term used as a generic reference to the legislative. Different terms such as “Congress”, “National Assembly” or local traditional names are used in different parts of the world.

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<sup>1</sup> UN Women, “Concepts and definitions”. Available at [www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/conceptsanddefinitions.htm](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/conceptsanddefinitions.htm) (accessed on 30 July 2021).

<b>Parliamentarian</b>	Term used as a generic reference to members of the legislative. Different terms such as “Member of Parliament”, “Congressperson”, “Senator”, “Representative” and “Assemblyperson” are used in different parts of the world.
<b>Repeal</b>	The process or act of passing legislation to remove a provision or law from operation.
<b>Rules of procedure (standing orders)</b>	The rules that govern how parliament operates and what processes apply to the conduct of its business.
<b>Strategic needs of women and girls</b>	These are services and/or opportunities which produce transformational impacts on women and girls. Examples include access to education at all levels, employment opportunities and access to social security.

# Acronyms

<b>CEDAW</b>	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
<b>COD</b>	Chamber of Deputies (Chile)
<b>CRC</b>	Convention on the Rights of the Child
<b>CSO</b>	Civil society organization
<b>CWP</b>	Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (group, New Zealand)
<b>DWF</b>	Department for Women and Families (Thailand)
<b>EVAW</b>	Elimination of violence against women
<b>FGM</b>	Female genital mutilation
<b>GBV</b>	Gender-based violence
<b>GDP</b>	Gross domestic product
<b>GIP</b>	Gender impact assessment
<b>GSP</b>	Gender-sensitive parliament
<b>HRC</b>	United Nations Human Rights Council
<b>IPU</b>	Inter-Parliamentary Union
<b>MP</b>	Member of parliament
<b>NAP</b>	National Action Plan
<b>NCHR</b>	National Centre for Human Rights (Uzbekistan)
<b>NGO</b>	Non-governmental organization
<b>OAS</b>	Organization of American States
<b>ODIHR</b>	Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
<b>OSCE</b>	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

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