

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2024

UN WOMEN TÜRKİYE





EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2024, UN Women Türkiye achieved significant progress in advancing gender equality, substantially enhancing the lives of women and girls through strategic interventions and strong partnerships across multiple sectors. Our comprehensive approach combined rapid humanitarian support with policy advocacy and initiatives to build lasting improvements for gender equality and women's empowerment.

Key highlights of the year include the launch of Türkiye's Gender responsive Planning and Budgeting Strategy and Action Plan, a structured framework introduced by the Government of Türkiye in collaboration with UN Women. This effort is transforming how public resources are allocated to actively promote women's empowerment and gender equality.

In response to the devastating earthquakes, we supported thousands of women through establishing Women's Empowerment Centres, which offered vital protection, legal aid, psychosocial support, and economic opportunities. These centres also empowered women to lead and influence recovery efforts, ensuring their voices shaped decision-making processes.

Significant strides were made in women's political participation. Targeted training and advocacy contributed to a notable increase in women's representation and leadership in local councils and national parliament.

Additionally, civil society and women's organizations gained strengthened capacities and essential tools for effective advocacy and programme implementation, amplifying grassroots voices and driving meaningful change.

Our strategic engagement with the private sector resulted in substantial commitments to the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs), integrating gender equality into corporate practices and broader economic systems. Innovative partnerships in sports further elevated public awareness, challenging entrenched gender stereotypes and highlighting sports as a transformative platform for gender equality.

Through strengthened coordination within the UN system, we ensured gender equality and women's empowerment remained central to broader UN initiatives, significantly enhancing collective impact.

Looking ahead to 2025 and the Beijing+30 milestone, UN Women Türkiye will intensify efforts focused on achieving full and equal decision-making power, bridging the digital divide, promoting climate resilience, ending violence against women, and strengthening civic spaces. By prioritizing youth leadership and deepening innovative partnerships, we remain dedicated to creating an equitable future where every woman and girl can thrive.

This publication highlights the transformative results achieved, underscoring our effective use of resources and inviting continued collaboration and investment from partners committed to gender equality as a cornerstone of sustainable development.



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FOREWORD

As we reflect on 2024, I see a year that tested our convictions and revealed our collective strength. Across the world and here in Türkiye, women and girls continue facing barriers that would stop many in their tracks. Yet what strikes me most is not the persistence of these challenges, but the determination of those who refuse to accept them.

At UN Women Türkiye, our mission is clear. We work to ensure every woman and girl lives with dignity, opportunity, and equality. This vision is not just our aspiration, it is becoming reality through deliberate action and transformative partnerships.

What we achieved in 2024 reflects a fundamental shift in how we work. We do not build programmes for women; we build partnerships with them. The launch of Türkiye's Gender responsive Planning and Budgeting Strategy represents more than policy, it is recognition that women's priorities must drive how resources are allocated. At the local level, the Purple Map enables municipalities to plan and deliver more gender responsive services. Our private sector partnerships through the Women's Empowerment Principles show what happens when businesses move beyond intentions to implementation. And our groundbreaking sports initiatives prove that transformation happens when we meet people where they are, addressing real needs as they exist.

As we launch the Beijing+30 Action Plan in 2025, the stakes could not be higher. Thirty years after that historic platform was adopted, we cannot accept that progress moves so slowly. The young women I meet across Türkiye understand something fundamental about gender equality. It is not one priority among many, but the foundation that makes all other progress possible. Young musician, feminist, writer and IT specialist Beyza Doğuç once said: "Passion knows no gender; we must eliminate the invisible walls that keep young women from recognizing their interests in fields traditionally dominated by men." I cannot think of a better way to put it.

This moment demands more than hope; it demands action. We will continue forging partnerships that give women and girls not just support, but genuine power.

Together, we will ensure that equality becomes reality for all women and girls in Türkiye.

Maryse Guimond
UN Women Türkiye Country Director

0. YEAR IN > NUMBERS

Rights first in crisis and recovery



10k+

women and girls in earthquake-affected areas received support, including:



1,400

who received dignity kits with essentials and help-seeking information in Hatay and Kahramanmaraş.

500



women survivors receive **safer, dignified care daily**: eight government shelters/violence-prevention centres and three CSO women's centres were refurbished, upgrading protection, privacy and referral pathways.



2,265

women who learned about their rights on violence against women and earthquake-related legal issues.

89%



of **3,550 women** enhanced leadership and skills through **Women's Empowerment Hubs** in temporary settlements in Hatay and Kahramanmaraş. Their collective action secured better transport routes, a community bakery, and childcare during vocational trainings in temporary settlements.



2,065

in hard-to-reach areas who accessed protection, psychosocial support, and livelihood activities.

Leadership and voices



88%↑

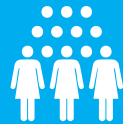
increase in women mayors elected at provincial and district levels. This number is rising from 41 in 2019 to 77 in 2024, reflecting steady gains from sustained capacity strengthening and advocacy by UN Women's Political Participation & Leadership programme and partnerships (since 2014).

53



of 280 women aspirants (nearly 20%) secured candidacies, and 17 were elected as municipal councillors as a result of UN Women and KA-DER's capacity-strengthening efforts on women's political participation.

30%



of Türkiye's population now lives in five major cities (İstanbul, Bursa, Adana, Kocaeli, Gaziantep) that use the **Purple Map (an interactive social risk map co-created with women)** to design gender responsive services. Since 2023, adoption has expanded to **seven cities, covering 38 per cent of the population.**



6%

of the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye (35 members) sharpened skills for gender responsive law-making and leadership.

Nearly 70%



of the ministries (11 out of 17) in Türkiye integrated concrete women's empowerment measures into the 2025 Presidential Annual Programme.

An end to violence



43

Tent Chat sessions across 30 seasonal agriculture tent areas in Adana, Gaziantep, and Izmir **provided a safe space for 557 women and girls** to discuss the challenges they face, particularly regarding child, early, and forced marriages.

500+



500+ frontline responders trained including 112 Emergency Hotline staff across 59 provinces handling 100+ millions calls annually, enhanced their knowledge on violence against women and girls' identification and remote risk management which marks a first time intervention in Türkiye.

Empowerment in fair economies and private sector

WEPS

596

WEPS signatories in Türkiye (**56 new in 2024; second worldwide**) and **320 male employees** in participating companies trained on inclusive workplace practices.

54%↑



increase in gender responsive performance indicators — rising from 39 in 2022 to 60 in the **Government's 2025 budget programmes**.

230,000

employees in 14 new companies strengthened their institutional capacity to implement gender equality via targeted Women's Empowerment Principles support and solutions to implementation challenges.



Engagement for youth and communities



Innovative formats

by **UN Women Türkiye** such as Memory Walks, Speed Dialogue, and Data Visualization Hackathon, engaged an initial of 60 young people creating non-hierarchical, intergenerational dialogue that turned ideas on gender equality into replicable outputs.

10

nationwide civil society organisations (CSOs)

delivered programmes on ending violence, women's economic empowerment, gender responsive climate action, and disaster risk reduction, reaching thousands of women through their networks; 36 local groups strengthened internal capacity (since 2021).



Communication and digital Advocacy



15.2k

new followers on UN Women Türkiye's social media — amplifying advocacy reach and engagement.

6.53m

people nationwide were reached by UN Women Türkiye posts on social media.



5.8m

social media actions were generated by influencer partnerships (watching, sharing, commenting, or saving posts).

16,975

media mentions kept equality on the national agenda.





Youth at TED University came together to raise their voices for all women and girls on 11 March 2025. Photo: UN Women

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Gender responsive planning and budgeting

In 2024, public institutions in Türkiye used gender responsive budgeting (GRB) tools to a greater extent in key planning and budgeting processes, resulting in more equal consideration of women's and men's needs in budget allocations. Similarly, national public institutions more explicitly included targets and indicators on women's empowerment in their new five year Strategic Plans. The inclusion of GRB in high-level policy documents and increased use of GRB instruments contribute to overcoming the barrier of low financing for women's empowerment commitments. **Rights based advocacy NGOs, women council members, and city council**



Local government and civil society representatives participated in a Dialogue Meeting in Eskişehir in 2023. Photo: UN Women

representatives formed new Women's Budget Groups in Edirne, Eskişehir, Gaziantep, and Kocaeli provinces and produced four monitoring reports in 2024. UN Women's extensive efforts in capacity strengthening and advocacy on GRB tools have contributed to these changes, aiming to ensure adequate funding for women's empowerment policies.

○ Strengthening civil society capacities and multi-stakeholder partnerships



Civil society representatives hold "We are Many and One" signs at the project's closing event on 1 October 2024.
Photo: UN Women / Ender Baykuş

In 2024, UN Women Türkiye celebrated the resilience and determination of the women's movement, which continues to drive Türkiye's broader civic movement. **A highlight was an intergenerational dialogue that brought together senior and young women activists, fostering mutual learning and inspiration.** This year marked the final implementation period of UN Women's initiative through which it partners with CSOs for advocacy, policy impact, and service provision for women and girls. A distinctive feature of UN Women's partnerships with CSOs is a commitment to understand CSOs' needs, respond with flexible support, and complement their advocacy efforts. This approach enabled UN Women to support 46 emerging women's organisations and other rights-based CSOs across diverse localities in Türkiye. Equipped with new skills and opportunities, these organisations led advocacy on the care economy and climate action and amplified the voices of women and girls in overlooked communities, including refugee women and girls. **Partners reported measurable gains, including stronger**

advocacy skills and governance capacities, a 61.6 per cent increase in knowledge on gender data and evidence-based advocacy, deeper networking (new alliances formed), and productive policy exchanges, illustrated by the Policy Dialogue Series with 200+ participants from public institutions, academia, funders, and civil society. Looking ahead, we will focus on creating space for activists and CSOs in a shrinking civic environment, engaging younger generations, and countering anti-gender narratives. Strengthening the resilience of the women's movement is the enabling condition for fostering meaningful conversations among civic activists, advancing impactful gender equality advocacy, and developing a shared agenda for gender equality. UN Women will remain alongside the movement, hand in hand, shoulder to shoulder, responding to needs and providing targeted support to ensure these outcomes are realised.

Ending violence against women and girls



"Tent Chats" provide a safe space for women and girls in seasonal agriculture to share experiences with child, early, and forced marriages.
Photo: UN Women / Nilüfer Baş / 2024

In 2024, UN Women made significant strides in combating violence against women and girls. In Türkiye with the Ministry of Interior, we strengthened institutional responses to violence and also developed accessible post-earthquake legal materials, so women know their rights and the pathways to support. **In Kocaeli, we supported a first of its kind achievement for Türkiye: the Earthquake Emergency Coordination Plan for Women's Services.** Co-created with the Ministry of Family and Social Services, provincial authorities, universities, municipalities, and CSOs, this plan embeds prevention, survivor-centred services, and clear coordination roles into disaster risk reduction and response. Recognized as one of the few examples

globally, it offers a scalable model for other high-risk provinces. Securing a European Union-funded project to restore services in disaster-impacted provinces marked an important step towards full recovery and continuity of support. In 2025, we will focus on implementing the **"Restoring and Strengthening the Preventive and Protective Services in Response to Violence Against Women and Girls Affected by The Earthquakes in Türkiye"** Project together with the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), in collaboration with the Ministry of Family and Social Services (MoFSS) General Directorate on the Status of Women (GDSW) as the end-beneficiary, and mobilizing resources for new initiatives.

○ Women's leadership and political participation



In Manisa, women aspirants for the 2024 local elections enhanced their skills through candidate trainings held with KA-DER.
Photo: UN Women / Ayşe Gültekin / 2023

In 2024, UN Women Türkiye helped facilitate cross-party cooperation among women Members of Parliament and supported efforts to strengthen pathways to leadership for women at national and local levels. Throughout the year, we partnered with the Committee on Equal Opportunity for Women and Men (KEFEK/EOC) to promote international standards, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Platform for Action, through targeted briefings and exchanges. In partnership with the EOC and the Inter-Parliamentary Union, we convened

the Women Leaders meeting in July, a milestone dialogue where women parliamentarians from diverse political backgrounds shared experiences and explored approaches to more gender responsive parliaments. **At the policy level, for the first time, the Government's 12th National Development Plan includes measures to increase women's participation and representation in decision-making mechanisms.** In 2025, we will work with government, parliament, political parties, and civil society to help translate these commitments into action and measurable gains in women's equal and full participation.

We cannot accept a world where half the population is systematically excluded from decision-making. We know the solutions: quotas, electoral reforms, and the political will to dismantle systemic barriers. The time for half-measures is over, it is time for governments to act now to ensure women have an equal seat at every table where power is exercised.

Sima Bahous

Executive Director of UN Women

Private sector engagement for gender equality

In 2024, Türkiye solidified its global leadership in Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs), ranking second worldwide with 596 signatories. UN Women Türkiye expanded the Unstereotype Alliance, welcoming three new brands, and empowered 10 companies and four WEPs Allies, impacting 230,000 employees and USD 46.74 billion in turnover through the WEPs in Action programme.

Key WEPs implementation projects included partnerships with OPET, Nokia, and Tüpraş, as well as Fenerbahçe Sports Club's support for gender equality in sports and the HeForShe movement. Additionally, UN Women Türkiye advanced gender responsive procurement, connecting women's cooperatives with major retailers and fostering national and international partnerships to scale impact.



Photo: UN Women



Photo: UN Women



Sözden Eyleme WEPs Programı Kapanış Toplantısı 21 Mart 2024



Şişecam representatives at the WEPs in Action Closing Meeting, reaffirming their commitment to women's empowerment on 21 March 2024.
Photo: UN Women

Male engagement and social norms



In 2024, UN Women Türkiye laid the groundwork for engaging men and boys as allies for equality across civil society, frontline services, and schools in high-risk areas. **We set up youth-led structures, recruited specialized facilitators in positive masculinities, and identified municipalities and community spaces where mixed-gender dialogues can take root.** With a clear monitoring framework, do-no-harm standards, and a communications plan that addresses backlash, we now have the architecture to activate young men and boys alongside young women, in constructive, measurable, community-based dialogue and action in 2025. Additionally, 40 representatives from 20 national CSOs strengthened skills to design and deliver male engagement programmes in post-disaster contexts, tackling the specific challenges faced by men and boys. As part of the HeForShe Initiative, 12 more individuals joined Fenerbahçe Sports Club’s volunteer trainer cohort, expanding role-model capacity in sports settings.

To embed norms change in services, 159 staff (98 women, 61 men) at Umutkent Temporary Shelter Units in Adiyaman and Hatay built knowledge on positive masculinities and gender-based discrimination, identifying ways to integrate equality into daily operations. In Southeastern Anatolia, where child, early, and forced marriage (CEFM) risk is higher, 28 teachers (23 women, five men) in Diyarbakır enhanced capacities on CEFM legislation, referral pathways, gender responsive education, male engagement, and staff well-being, helping create safer, more inclusive school communities.



Photo: UN Women



Photo: UN Women

Earthquake response

In 2024, UN Women Türkiye stood with women and girls still rebuilding their lives after the earthquakes. **As chair of the Women's Empowerment in Humanitarian Action (WEHA) Working Group, we supported every sector to centre women's and girls' needs in planning. A practical outcome was a set of sector-specific gender checklists, co-developed with each cluster, that guide assessments, planning, service delivery, and monitoring—making gender responsive actions non-negotiable and strengthening accountability across the response.** Working with CSOs, ministries, and local authorities, we connected women to protection services, legal information, and psychosocial care,



UN Women Executive Director Sima Bahous visits the Women's Empowerment Centre in Hatay in May 2024. Photo: UN Women



Embroidery by women in the container city in Kahramanmaraş a reflection of resilience and creativity. Photo: UN Women / 2023

and, when needs were most urgent, provided cash assistance so survivors could act quickly and safely. In Kahramanmaraş and Hatay, Women's Empowerment Centres became safe places to learn, organize, and heal. We also supported first-line responders at the Ministry of Family and Social Services to recognize risks and refer survivors safely. In 2025, we will keep women and girls at the heart of recovery.



We thought we were forgotten; we had come to an end. After the earthquake, the healing power of collective production has been a great source of motivation for all of us.

Zarif Sönmez Arslan

Production Supervisor of Samandağ Women's Cooperative

UN system coordination

As part of its triple mandate, UN Women leads and coordinates the UN system on gender equality—and holds it accountable. UN Women is tasked to “lead, coordinate and promote accountability” for the UN’s work on gender equality, including through common tools that help country teams plan and measure progress. The shared plan in Türkiye is the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), the UN’s primary, country-level blueprint with the Government for development results. In coordination with the Resident Coordinator’s Office and the Ministry of Family and Social Services, we ensure gender equality is embedded across outcomes, not treated as a standalone issue, and we set standards for what “good” looks like—then track delivery. To turn commitments into results, we lead the UN Country Team’s (UNCT) gender equality action plan and scorecard (SWAP). It sets clear targets for every agency and tracks how well gender is built into their programmes. In 2024, as chair of the UN Result Group on the Empowerment of Women and Girls,

we secured a higher funding target for gender equality for the next UN programme cycle. UN Women coordinated a system-wide quality review of the UN Gender Equality Marker (GEM) across agencies in Türkiye, strengthening project design for gender results and improving the credibility of reported outcomes. The review enhanced the consistency of GEM application, clarifying how resources across the UN portfolio are allocated to gender equality and women’s empowerment, and reinforcing the evidence base for programme decisions and public reporting. These steps tighten accountability for how much of the UN’s portfolio meaningfully advances gender equality, and how well UNCT is delivering on it. Coordination also shows up publicly. Our office led UN-wide advocacy moments such as International Women’s Day and the 16 Days of Activism, aligning messages, partners, and metrics under a One-UN approach so our collective voice—and impact—is larger than the sum of its parts.



UN Türkiye marked International Women’s Day in Ankara in March 2024, with the “Invest in Women for Progress” event.
Photo: UN Türkiye



Shine a Light campaign launch event held on 22 November 2024 in Ankara.
Photo: UN Women

Communications and advocacy

In a more complex communications landscape, where audience attention is fragmented and resources must stretch further, strategic advocacy proved one of our strengths. In 2024, UN Women Türkiye focused on evidence-based storytelling, broad coalitions, and clear calls to action that turn awareness into engagement. We ran high-impact campaigns that expanded both reach and influence. The #InvestInWomen campaign, led by Goodwill Ambassador Demet Evgar, aired in prime time and sparked a nationwide conversation on women's economic and social rights, earning three Felis Awards (Entertainment, PR, Social Responsibility). During the 16 Days of Activism, #ShineALight addressed everyday insecurity for women and girls; in partnership with Ogilvy 4129, Media Compact outlets, and more than 100 private-sector allies, the campaign generated 7.8 million digital impressions and sustained coverage

across TV, print, and online, and received multiple Crystal Apple awards. Sports anchored our efforts to shift social norms.

Through UN Women's global partnership with the International Olympic Committee (IOC), we collaborated with the Turkish Olympic Committee on a Paris 2024 activation that amplified women athletes' voices and positioned sport as an essential field for equality. On the International Day of the Girl, messages from leading Olympic and para-athletes, including Eda Erdem, reached millions and inspired girls and their families to see a future in sport. Coordinated media work with UN partners and Media Compact members delivered 16,975 media mentions and sustained visibility nationwide. By pairing partner advocacy with creative content and a One-UN approach, we built a stronger platform for Beijing+30.



Para athletes and Olympic athletes came together on the International Day of the Girl, October 2024, in an event jointly organized with the National Olympic and Paralympic Committees.
Photo: UN Women

LEVELING THE PLAYGROUND – GENDER EQUALITY IN AND THROUGH SPORTS

UN Women Türkiye has strategically positioned sports as a powerful platform for advancing gender equality, creating innovative partnerships with the Turkish Olympic Committee and National Paralympic Committee. These collaborations have yielded impressive results, with our International Day of the Girl campaign and Paris 2024 Olympics awareness initiatives collectively reaching millions across Türkiye, dramatically increasing visibility for women athletes and challenging gender stereotypes.

The flagship “Advancing Gender Equality in and through Sports in Türkiye” project, implemented in partnership with Fenerbahçe Sports Club and supported by Tüpraş, achieved significant milestones in 2024. A second cohort of trainers was equipped to mainstream gender equality principles throughout the club, ensuring long-term sustainability of these efforts. **The development of a comprehensive safeguarding policy tailored specifically for Fenerbahçe Sports Club marked a breakthrough in creating safe, inclusive, and respectful environments for all athletes.**



Sport is a powerful tool for transforming societies. We take great pride in the achievements of our women athletes, knowing that their victories are not just confined to the field but also contribute significantly to societal awareness.

Selma Altay Rodopman

*Spokesperson for HeForShe Fenerbahçe
Member of the Board of Directors of Fenerbahçe Sports
Club and the Turkish National Olympic Committee*

The project also addressed media representation through focused workshops with the club's communications professionals. These sessions provided crucial insights that shaped the development of a **Gender Responsive Sports Reporting Handbook**, set to launch in 2025 as a resource for journalists and media outlets across the country.

Looking ahead, UN Women Türkiye will expand its work in sports, beginning with the close collaboration Eda Erdem, Captain of the Turkish National Women's Volleyball Team, as a powerful symbol of female leadership in sports.

Building on existing foundations, we will deepen our engagement with Olympic and Paralympic committees while expanding collaboration with sports federations to institutionalize gender responsive organizational models throughout Türkiye's sports ecosystem.

Through these strategic initiatives, UN Women Türkiye is demonstrating that sports can be a transformative force for gender equality, offering pathways to challenge stereotypes, develop leadership skills, and create role models who inspire future generations.



Girls are the architects and changemakers of their own future. Through sports, they can enrich their lives, feel empowered, and gain the courage to achieve their dreams.

Eda Erdem

Captain of Türkiye's National Volleyball Team



Participants of the Green Jobs and Entrepreneurship Centre for Women in June 2024.
Photo: UN Women / Ebru Demirel

IMPACT STORIES

🔗 Women lead the way for greener neighbourhoods

In Gaziantep, a group of women is transforming their communities, one garden at a time. Through the Green Jobs and Entrepreneurship Centre for Women—a partnership between UN Women, the Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality, and the Foundation for the Support of Women's Work (KEDV), women are learning skills like planting, composting, and rainwater harvesting. These skills are not just about sustainability; they're about reclaiming agency, forming and leading communities, and building stronger, greener neighbourhoods.

"We used to think waste was just waste," said Nesrin Özdemir, a participant. "Now, we see it as something we

can reuse and repurpose. We are teaching our families and neighbours to do the same."

For Özgül Yedipınar, the centre has become more than a training space. *"At home, we were confined to four walls. Here, we touch the soil, we grow things, and we grow ourselves,"* she shared.

Supported by the Strong Civic Space for Gender Equality project, funded by the European Union, the centre is a testament to how women's leadership can drive community resilience. *"These women are not just learning skills, they are becoming leaders in their communities,"* said Ebru Ağduk, UN Women Türkiye Programme Manager.

○ UN Women’s support to women reclaiming their lives

In the aftermath of Türkiye’s devastating earthquakes, women in affected regions faced unimaginable challenges. Through a partnership with Support to Life (STL), UN Women provided critical support to 719 women, offering legal aid, psychological counselling, and cash assistance to those facing gender-based violence.

One woman, who escaped an abusive marriage with UN Women’s help, shared, “They gave me a phone, taught me how to use the KADES app, and helped me create a safety plan. For the first time, I felt like I had a way out.”



Photo: UN Women/Nilüfer Baş /2023

In Vartana Container Camp, a mother of five found hope after years of violence. “They did not just help me leave but they helped me start over,” she said. UN Women connected her to legal aid, secured her a safe home, and even helped her find a job.

For another woman battling cancer and emotional abuse, the support was life changing. “The counselling and cash assistance gave me the strength to focus on healing,” she said.

These stories reflect the quiet but profound impact of UN Women’s work in earthquake-affected areas, where women are rebuilding their lives with dignity and determination.

○ “I didn’t know it was my wedding”



Tent Chats aim to raise awareness of CEFM and empower women to take action in their communities.
Photo: UN Women / Nilüfer Baş / 2024

In the agricultural fields of Adana, where seasonal workers live in makeshift tents, UN Women’s “Tent Chats” are creating safe spaces for women and girls to share their stories and learn about their rights. More than 43 sessions in 2024, 557 women and girls, and 32 men and boys, discussed the harmful effects of child, early, and forced marriages (CEFM).

Fatma*, a mother of eight, shared, “I was married at 14. Now I know it’s a crime, and I will never let my daughter go through the same.” Elif*, married at 12, recalled, “I did not even know it was my wedding. They did not put me in a gown so I would not be scared. I thought I was at someone else’s celebration.”

Through these conversations, women like Zeynep*, who became a mother at 16, found solidarity and strength. “To give birth and work in the fields at that age was too much. But now, I know my rights, and I will fight for my daughters,” she said.

The initiative, part of UN Women’s broader efforts to combat CEFM, is empowering women to break the cycle of early marriages and advocate for change in their communities.

* Names have been changed to protect identities.

Legal literacy in post-earthquake Türkiye



Women living in the container city in Malatya are at an informative session.
Photo: UN Women / Ebru Demirel / 2024

After the 2023 earthquakes, accessing justice became a distant dream for many women in Türkiye. Through a partnership with the Union of Turkish Bar Associations (UTBA), UN Women launched a project to provide legal literacy sessions to more than 2,700 women in affected provinces throughout 2024.

"Many women believed justice was out of reach," said Duygu Nurefşan Doğan, a lawyer with the Malatya Bar Association. "We showed them that they have rights and the power to claim them."

In Malatya, where the courthouse was destroyed, volunteer lawyers held sessions in container cities, offering guidance on family law, property rights, and protections against violence.

"These sessions gave us hope," said one participant. "We learned that we're not alone, and that the law is on our side."

By equipping women with knowledge and connecting them to legal resources, UN Women is helping to rebuild not just homes but also trust in justice.

Breaking barriers in politics

In Türkiye, women's participation in politics is growing, but barriers remain. To bridge this gap, UN Women Türkiye, in partnership with the Committee on Equal Opportunity for Women and Men of the Turkish Grand National Assembly (EOC) and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), hosted the

Women Leaders meeting in July 2024 in Istanbul. The event brought together women leaders, policymakers, and experts to exchange strategies and develop a roadmap for stronger women's participation in political decision making.



Women leaders at the July 2024 meeting with Asya Varbanova, former UN Women Türkiye Country Director, and Çiğdem Erdoğan, Chairperson of the TGNA Commission on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men. Photo: UN Women



"A gender responsive parliament is not just an ideal—it's essential for sustainable development," emphasized Nicole Ameline, former chair and a member of CEDAW and former French minister. Discussions highlighted successful international practices, including quota systems, women's caucuses, and legislative reforms to strengthen women's leadership.

Participants also examined Türkiye's 2023 general elections and 2024 local elections, guided by research from UN Women consultant Assoc. Prof. Ahu Sumbas. The analysis exposed persistent gender inequalities and the urgent need for policy reforms to increase women's participation in decision making.

The event concluded with a strategic roadmap, linking Türkiye's efforts to the Beijing+30 process, reinforcing UN Women's leadership in advancing gender equality. "This wasn't just a meeting, it was a movement to ensure women take their rightful place in shaping our future," said one participant.

Through initiatives like this, UN Women Türkiye continues to lead the way in strengthening women's leadership in politics, ensuring their voices are heard in decision making spaces across the country.

○ Transforming workplaces, one step at a time

Türkiye's private sector plays a crucial role in gender equality, but measuring real progress remains a challenge. UN Women Türkiye launched Sözden Eyleme WEPs / WEPs in Action to assess and strengthen the implementation of the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs) in Türkiye.

Ten companies participated in the initiative, supported by four WEPs Allies as mentors, collectively employing more than 230,000 people. Over two months, the participating ten companies developed tailored action plans to integrate gender equality into corporate policies with the guidance of UN Women and mentoring of the four WEPs Allies where needed.

Eight months later, progress was clear. 50 per cent of companies established long-term gender equality structures, all set new WEPs-related goals, and half committed to reassessing their progress using the Gender Gap Analysis Tool. One company increased its female manager ratio to 39 per cent, expanded workplace benefits for women, and strengthened its diversity policies.

Public commitments from top executives, including Anadolu Sigorta, EnerjiSA, İnci Holding, Mavi, and Türk Traktör, amplified the programme's success. The initiative also prompted self-reflection: "We held a mirror up to ourselves, identified gaps, and began taking the right steps," shared another signatory.

With Sözden Eyleme WEPs / WEPs in Action, UN Women Türkiye is setting a new benchmark for gender-inclusive business practices, proving that when companies move beyond words, real progress follows.



Attendees of WEPs in Action Closing Meeting on 21 March 2024
Photo: UN Women



International Conference on Gender Responsive Budgeting: A Transformative Approach Towards Equality was held in Ankara, May 2024.
Photo: UN Women

○ Women count in Türkiye’s budgeting process

Budgets reflect national priorities, and in Türkiye, UN Women’s work on gender responsive budgeting (GRB) is ensuring that public funds actively support gender equality.

At the global level, 68 countries working with UN Women adopted 490 gender responsive national and local multi-sectoral policies, strategies and plans, potentially benefiting 2.7 billion women and girls. In Türkiye, we achieved parallel progress. Since 2020, the number of ministries integrating gender equality into their budgets has nearly tripled, reaching 11 by 2025. The Turkish Employment Agency (İŞKUR) introduced targets for women’s employment, while the Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Interior committed to improving women’s access to justice. Gender responsive performance indicators in national budgets increased from 39 in 2022 to 60 in 2025.

A major milestone in 2024 was the launch of the Gender Responsive Planning and Budgeting Strategy and Action Plan, embedding gender equality into public spending. During Parliament’s budget discussions, the Minister

proudly highlighted, “50.6 per cent of our 2025 budget will benefit women and girls.”

Since 2022, more than 2,000 public officials have participated in UN Women-led training, equipping them to integrate gender perspectives into public services. UN Women Türkiye continues to drive systemic change, proving that when women count, they are counted.



We only can accelerate process towards a better world and towards a thriving economy if we advance investing in women and girls.

Dr. Elisabeth Klatzer
GRB Expert

Building a unified approach to equality



UN Women, together with UN Türkiye and other UN agencies joins at the Orange Summit hosted by Dokuz Eylül University during 16 Days of Activism in November 2024.
Photo: UN Türkiye

In Türkiye, UN Women is leading a quiet but transformative shift in how the United Nations system prioritizes gender equality. As chair of the Result Group on Women's Empowerment, UN Women ensures that gender equality is not just a goal but a core pillar of all UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2021–2025 initiatives.

By 2024, this leadership secured a major breakthrough: agreement on 70 per cent of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) Türkiye's financial resources will be allocated

to gender equality by 2026, a significant increase from the current 46 per cent. This milestone reflects years of advocacy and coordination, ensuring that funding priorities align with global gender commitments.

UN Women Türkiye fulfils a critical coordination mandate in the country by leading the UNCT's GEM review to streamline how gender focused investments are tracked and implemented, and convening UN-wide advocacy moments (e.g., International Women's Day, 16 Days) to amplify a unified voice on gender equality across programming.



From left to right: UNFPA Türkiye Country Representative Mariam Khan, UN Resident Coordinator in Türkiye Babatunde Ahonsi, former UN Women Türkiye Country Director Asya Varbanova, and IOM Türkiye Chief of Mission Gerard Karl Waite holding placards at the launch of the UN Türkiye Digital 16 Days of Activism campaign in 2024.
Photo: UN Türkiye / Oktay Üstün



UN Türkiye agencies celebrated International Women's Day in Ankara under the theme 'Invest in Women: Accelerate Progress,' in March 2024 with the participation of the Minister of Family and Social Services. Photo: UN Türkiye

Youth, art, and data: voices shaping Beijing+30



UN Women Türkiye National Goodwill Ambassador Demet Evgar on Show TV primetime news News on 8 March 2024 International Women's Day.

In 2024, with the support of UN Women, young people across Türkiye stepped forward to shape the Beijing+30 conversation, not as audiences but as actors.

At a gender data-visualization hackathon, students turned spreadsheets into living stories: maps that made inequality visible at a glance, dashboards local leaders could actually use, and bold graphics built to travel fast on social media. Beyza Doğuç, a digital artist—who calls her studio “a lab for equality”—took the same spirit into sound and code, reminding young women that passion “*knows no gender*,” and turning barriers into creative briefs. Aybuke Yıldırım, a teenage footballer who wrote her own playbook, spoke about playing without judgment. Her words echoed by thousands of girls sharing photos from school fields and neighbourhood courts.

UN Women Türkiye provided mentoring and editorial support and necessary platforms so young women could tell their stories with confidence. As part of our advocacy efforts, we commissioned and published youth blogs, featured creators and athletes across our platforms, and amplified their voices through our channels.

Together, these voices and the platforms that carry them are building the movement we need in 2025. A creative, evidence-driven, and unapologetically hopeful movement. They are not waiting for change; they are making it and inviting the country to move with them.



Photo: Türkiye Voleybol Federasyonu / Bülent Uçma

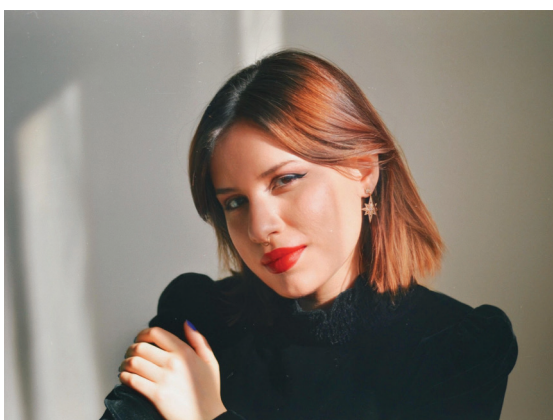


Photo: Beyza Doğuç / Personal Archive



Artificial intelligence risks reinforcing gender inequalities when trained on biased data—yet it also holds a mirror to society and carries the power to transform it.

Beyza Doğuç
Digital Artist, Musician



Students at the TED University taking a selfie after a UN Women event in November 2024.

Photo: UN Women



Photo: UN Women / Ebru Demirel / 2024

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

○ Women entrepreneurs join green supply chains

A strategic partnership between UN Women Türkiye, the Sustainable Journey, a local, first of its kind social enterprise/cooperative, and a global hygiene solutions provider is transforming gender responsive procurement by integrating women entrepreneurs into circular economy and green supply chains. This initiative plugs women producers into major hotels' value chains, where they upcycle discarded linens into new products hotels repurchase, creating both decent employment opportunities and environmental impact. During the pilot phase of this initiative in Türkiye, 42 women producers transformed 1.5 tons of discarded hotel linens into more than 36,500 upcycled products, generating direct and fair income while reducing textile waste. With regional expansion underway, the project aims to integrate 1,000 women and upcycle 1,500 tons of waste over the next five years.



Gaye Tuğrulöz from the Social Climate Association is speaking at the "An Intergenerational Dialogue on the Path Since 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action 30th Anniversary" session in October 2024. Photo: UN Women



Achieving climate justice is only possible when gender equality is at the core of every action.

Gaye Tuğrulöz

Chair of Social Climate Association

○. Advocating for the rights of women with disabilities

Through a strategic partnership with the Association of Women with Disabilities (ENGKAD), UN Women Türkiye is strengthening the evidence-base for policy reforms to enhance the rights and access to services for women with disabilities. The study, **“Status, Needs, and Priorities of Women with Disabilities in Türkiye: A Rights-Based Approach,”** surveyed 991 women and conducted 33 in-depth interviews to collect data from diverse disability groups assessing their socioeconomic status and level of access to education, healthcare, employment, public life, and protective mechanisms against violence. By identifying gaps in policies and services as well as varying and persistent challenges women face in exercising their rights, the study aims to contribute to a more inclusive framework that addresses their specific needs.

Findings were disseminated through accessible reports and high-level events, including the September 2024 Final Report Launch, where policymakers, CSOs, and academics engaged in discussions to push for systemic change. UN Women also contributed to the UN Disability Inclusion Strategy, strengthening disability-related data collection to inform future policies.

UN Women Türkiye promoted the report on the December 3rd International Day of Persons with Disabilities.

- ✂ Social media posts highlighting key data on violence against women with disabilities reached more than 180,000 people on Instagram, supported by collaboration with ENGKAD.
- ✂ The report was featured in *Milliyet*, several printed and online media outlets and received significant local media coverage, reaching 237,000 in print.
- ✂ It was also covered by Bianet, a key platform for women’s rights news.



Launch event of the “Status, Needs, and Priorities of Women with Disabilities in Türkiye: A Rights-Based Approach” study in December 2024 Photo: UN Women

Gender transformative leadership



Social worker at Women's Empowerment Centre in Hatay.
Photo: UN Women / Nilüfer Baş

In partnership with Koç Holding and the Foundation for the Support of Women's Work (KEDV), UN Women Türkiye established Women's Empowerment Centres, also referred to as Women and Girls Empowerment and Solidarity Hubs, in Hatay and Kahramanmaraş. These

centres have provided safe and inclusive spaces for women in earthquake-affected areas to access protection services, build skills, and strengthen their leadership. In total, 3,848 women benefited from services including legal support, psychosocial assistance, and leadership development.

Through this partnership, women have not only recovered but also led. Women Neighbourhood Committees formed in temporary settlements have emerged as key actors in the recovery process, using evidence-based advocacy to push for tangible improvements such as revised public transportation routes. Many of the women trained through the centres are now actively engaged in gender responsive recovery and service delivery, demonstrating the transformative power of collective agency and solidarity in crisis response.



UN Women Executive Director Sima Bahous visits the earthquake region in May 2024, sharing a moment of solidarity with women supported through the programme. Photo: UN Women / Ender Baykuş



Women's organizations receive less than 5 per cent of global humanitarian funding, and yet they do very effective work with very little. More resources must be allocated to work to meet the unique needs of women and girls.

Gülfer Kırbaş

Coordinator of Çember Civil Initiative Association

Engaging millions with communication and advocacy partnerships

In 2024, UN Women Türkiye built a focused partner network to carry our messages further and with greater credibility. We worked with our Goodwill Ambassador Demet Evgar and a roster of trusted social-media influencers to create native content that sparked conversation around **#InvestInWomen** and other priority themes. Opinion leaders, including athletes, private sector leaders, artists, and academics, recorded short video messages that we packaged for events and social channels, reinforcing clear calls to action.

Youth groups and civil society partners played a central role. They co-created copy and visuals, localised messages for their communities, hosted peer dialogues, and cross posted campaign asset, giving our advocacy a strong grassroots footprint. By aligning with UN Women's mandate, partners strengthened their public credibility on gender equality and social impact. This approach delivered measurable reach for all partners. On the **International Day of the Girl**, campaign videos featuring Eda Erdem and İdil Nas Acar generated nearly 8 million views. During the 16 Days of Activism, **#ShineALight**, run with Ogilvy 4129 and more than 100 private sector partners, reached 7.8 million impressions, with brands such as Koton and UEFA approved football clubs amplifying the message.



In October 2024, İdil Nas Acar shared her story with UN Women's HeForShe Türkiye campaign for the International Day of the Girl, inspiring girls to pursue their dreams through the power of sports. Photo: UN Women / İlkin Eskişehlivan

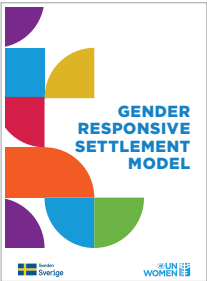


Together, these partnerships expanded our reach, deepened public commitment, and laid a strong platform for **Beijing+30 in 2025** while broadening UN Women Türkiye's circle of supporters and creating a ripple effect that brings more people and communities together around equality.

Koton's store window displays with lighted umbrellas and campaign slogan showing their support to UN Women's 'Shine a Light' campaign during the 16 Days of Activism in 2024. Photo: UN Women

KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS

The following list highlights a selection of UN Women Türkiye’s knowledge products completed in 2024. It showcases flagship reports, toolkits and studies that illustrate our work across earthquake response, gender responsive policy, data leadership and legal empowerment.



Gender Responsive Settlement Model

This model serves as a guide to consider the differentiated needs and priorities of women and girls when establishing new temporary and permanent settlements during the resumption of basic services in disaster and crisis-affected areas.



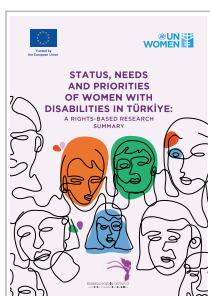
Enhancing Women’s Post-Earthquake Legal Literacy

A project brief detailing UN Women Türkiye’s inaugural collaboration with the Union of Turkish Bar Associations to deliver post-earthquake legal literacy sessions—empowering women survivors with critical knowledge and access to legal support following the February 2023 earthquakes.



Women in Rural Türkiye: Navigating Barriers in Post-Disaster Recovery

A 2022 research report presenting the first-ever nationwide survey of 4,299 rural Turkish women across 26 provinces, assessing their access to services, rights and resources—and addressing critical data gaps that have long limited solutions to their socio-economic challenges in agriculture, livestock and unpaid domestic work.



Status, Needs, and Priorities of Women with Disabilities in Türkiye

A 2024 rights-based, gender responsive research report presenting a national assessment of the status, needs and priorities of women with disabilities in Türkiye—offering evidence-based insights to inform inclusive policies and programming.



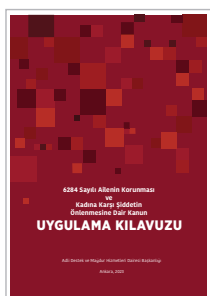
Gender Responsive Budgeting Analysis for Central Level Public Institutions

A 2024 analysis booklet presenting gender responsive budgeting assessments in selected central-level public institutions under the “Implementation of Gender Responsive Planning and Budgeting in Türkiye” project—offering key insights and lessons learned to guide broader adoption.



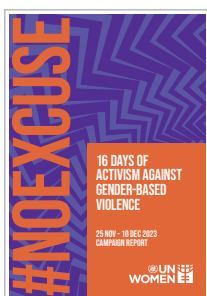
Her Aftermath: The Impact of Earthquakes in Türkiye – Field Research Findings on Women’s Legal Priorities

A field-research report—the third issue in the “Her Aftermath” series—identifying the top barriers women face in accessing justice after Türkiye’s February 2023 earthquakes, summarizing key findings and offering targeted recommendations for recovery-phase legal support.



Implementation Guide: Law No. 6284

A 2024 step-by-step implementation manual for Türkiye’s Law No. 6284 on the Protection of the Family and Prevention of Violence against Women, aligned with CEDAW and other international standards, offering judges, prosecutors and service providers clear guidance—including model forms and referral pathways—to uphold survivors’ rights effectively.



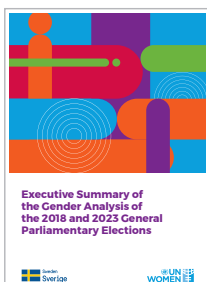
#NoExcuse for Violence Against Women 2023

The report reflects on the outcomes of UN Women's #NoExcuse Campaign and the support it received from partners and the private sector. Conducted within 16 Days of Activism in 2023, drew attention to the importance of protective legal frameworks and called for the effective implementation of laws to prevent violence against women.



Women's Political Participation in Türkiye: A Growing Presence and Influence

An analytical briefing that traces the rise in women's parliamentary and local council seats, offering evidence-based strategies for further inclusion.



Executive Summary of the Gender Analysis of the 2018 and 2023 General Parliamentary Elections

A 2024 executive summary delivering a comparative, gender-disaggregated analysis of finalized candidate lists and elected Members of Parliament in Türkiye's 2018 and 2023 general elections—presenting detailed datasets to inform strategies for bolstering women's political participation.



Implementing Gender Responsive Planning and Budgeting in Türkiye - Strategy Document and Action Plan

A 2024 national strategy and action plan for systematically embedding a gender equality perspective into national and local policymaking, planning, and budgeting processes to empower women and advance sustainable gender equality outcomes.



Photo: UN Women / İlkin Eskişehlivan



The premiere of 30 Years, 7 Stories documentary on March 7th in Ankara—marking three decades of progress since the Beijing Declaration, brought together activists, academics, diplomats, and young leaders. Photo: UN Women

LOOKING AHEAD - 2025 AND BEYOND

In 2025, UN Women Türkiye enters a pivotal year: the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the start of the final five year countdown to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Building on the gains of 2024 and a bridge year into our 2026–2030 strategy, we will continue translating commitments into delivery for all women and girls.

Our work will advance across the full span of our mandate, normative support, high-quality programs, and UN system coordination, so progress is visible in people's lives and traceable in public policy and budgets. We will strengthen women's leadership and participation in decision-making while equally prioritizing economic empowerment, gender responsive procurement, and practical solutions in the care economy that unlock time and income. We will intensify prevention and response to violence against women and girls, expanding survivor-centred services, justice pathways, and norms-change efforts, including engagement with youth and with men and boys.



Photo: UN Women



To make change durable, we will deepen gender responsive planning and budgeting at national and local levels, improve the production and use of gender data, and help embed equality standards in institutions, laws, and services. We will continue to back civil society leadership, including youth-led and disability-inclusive groups, so advocacy remains strong in a challenging civic space. Recognizing ongoing disaster risks, we will strengthen gender responsive preparedness and recovery, ensuring women's rights are protected across the humanitarian–development–peace nexus.



A woman shares her story during the event 'Women-Led Disaster Response and Recovery: Stories of Resilience, Courage and Solidarity' held in Ankara on 14 November 2024. Photo: UN Women



*Women in the temporary settlement in Adiyaman.
Photo: UN Women / Ali Saltan / 2025*

Cross-cutting priorities will guide our actions: digital inclusion that closes the gender gap in technology; climate resilience that centers women and girls in just transitions; and sports as a platform to shift social norms and expand opportunities. Through our UN coordination role, we will keep gender equality embedded across the frameworks, apply common accountability tools, and report transparently on collective results. Strategic communication and advocacy will remain primary enablers of programme delivery and impact—amplifying evidence, building public will, strengthening accountability, and mobilizing resources to scale what works.

The countdown to 2030 has begun. UN Women Türkiye will use this year to accelerate actions that are ambitious, evidence-based, and scalable—so that equality moves from promise to practice for all women and girls.



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