

**Synthesis Report: Strengthening the UN's Commitment to Women and Girls
NGO Committee on the Status of Women Geneva Hackathon summary**

Background

Given the current discussions over the potential merger of UN Women and UNFPA, NGO Committee on the Status of Women Geneva encouraged members to hold consultations of members on the situation and provide potential solutions.

As a result of this initiative there are 11 output documents from these meetings.

Introduction The report below consolidates key insights and recommendations from the NGO CSW Geneva hackathon on 31 July 2026. The overarching consensus emphasizes the importance of maintaining a robust, gender-transformative approach that centers women and girls as over half of the global population. Ensuring effective mechanisms, adequate funding, and meaningful civil society participation remains paramount, regardless of whether reform results in the consolidation of entities like UN Women and UNFPA or preserves their independence.

Key Points from the Discussions

Unified and Strengthened Gender Equality Mechanisms

Civil society advocates for a coordinated, impactful approach across the UN system.

A strong, single entity should champion and oversee all work related to women and girls.

Departments within UN entities must adopt gender-sensitive lenses and work closely with dedicated women and girls' agencies.

Strategic use of funds is essential; savings should be reinvested into women's and girls' programs.

Recognize that women and girls constitute over 50% of the world's population; their equality is critical for peace, prosperity, and sustainable development.

Structural Reforms and Mergers

The joint proposal from UN Women and UNFPA offers opportunities for increased alignment and cost savings without the delays associated with full structural mergers.

Merging smaller entities can be beneficial, but merging large, complementary agencies like UN Women and UNFPA may be resource-intensive and potentially dilute the focus on gender equality. Concerns exist that mergers could diminish the visibility and importance of gender equality in the UN system.

A principled approach must underpin any merger, safeguarding women's rights as fundamental human rights.

Financial and Political Considerations

The ongoing financial crisis highlights the need for Member States to take responsibility for global governance and funding.

Developing secure, predictable funding streams is essential; reliance on savings or cost-cutting measures should not undermine programs for women and girls.

Calls for transparent, science-based data on savings and efficiencies, with a focus on directing resources toward women's rights initiatives.

The systemic financial crisis underscores the importance of global cooperation, with Member States prioritizing collective solutions over sovereignty assertions.

Role of UN Entities and Civil Society

UN Women's role as strategic, normative, and operational leader on gender equality must be preserved and strengthened.

Communications, visibility, and leadership development are critical to advancing women's rights. Civil society must be a core, ongoing partner, with mechanisms to ensure their voices influence policy and program implementation.

Accountability structures should include civil society representatives and independent oversight bodies to monitor commitments under frameworks like CEDAW, Beijing Platform, and ICPD.

Principles for Future Action

Success should be measured by tangible impacts on women's lives: leadership, safety, health, economic participation, and wellbeing.

Protect and prioritize funding for women and girls during any reform process.

Maintain technical expertise close to communities to ensure timely, context-specific interventions.

Leverage responsible AI to enhance efficiency while safeguarding human oversight.

Develop a unified digital platform for accessible information, funding, and partnership opportunities.

Institutional memory and knowledge transfer are vital to sustain progress and leadership.

Civil society involvement should be institutionalized as a permanent, strategic element in governance and oversight.

Final Reflection The core mission remains unchanged: to make women and girls stronger, safer, healthier, and more empowered. Institutional reforms—whether through maintaining independence or pursuing mergers—must prioritize outcomes that improve lives. Efficiency gains are secondary to the fundamental goal of advancing gender equality as a human rights imperative. Any change should reinforce the UN's capacity to serve as a resilient, effective advocate for women and girls worldwide.

Conclusion This synthesis underscores that the future of gender equality within the UN depends on principled, transparent, and impact-driven decisions. Whether reform leads to a consolidated entity or preserves existing structures, the focus must remain on empowering women and girls through effective, well-resourced, and inclusive systems.